MOSBY'S MEN

JOHN H. ALEXANDER

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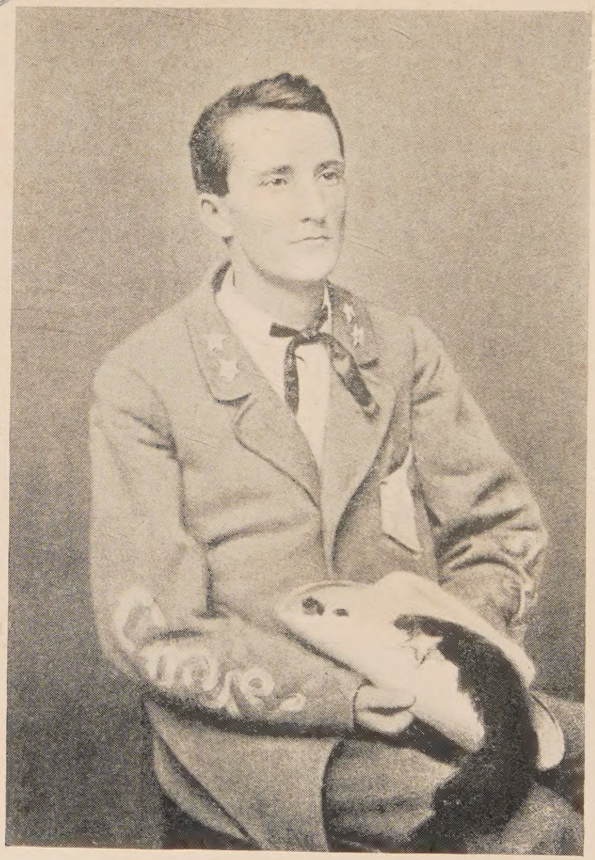

John S. Mosby

FRONTISPIECE

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MOSBY'S MEN

By

JOHN H. ALEXANDER

of Mosby's Rangers

(*Co. A*)

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TO THE CONFEDERATE

CAVALRYMAN

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J. W. FOSTER
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PREFACE

This book does not purport to be a history of Mosby's command, in the sense of being a full and accurate account of its operations. It is a narrative of what the writer saw of the men and their doings, as they impressed him at the time and as his memory reproduces them now. Many of their exploits—perhaps their finest performances—he neither participated in nor saw. When he has had occasion to refer to incidents outside of his personal knowledge, it is indicated. The extent and character of his information is also indicated.

It is very rarely that two men see the same thing in exactly the same way; and of all subjects upon which eyewitnesses differ, it seems that upon a fight —a battle—there is the most frequent and pronounced variance. So it is quite probable that some of our comrades may remember certain occurrences differently from the way I remember them. All that the writer claims is that they are here reproduced with absolute fidelity to his memory of them and there is nothing between the lids of this book which, in that sense, is not strictly true. He has in no instance consciously lapsed into fiction or colored an incident in the faintest degree. In these pages the reader has Mosby's Men exactly as the writer had the privilege of knowing them, and as he now understands them, after a lifetime's observation of men and things.

MOSBY'S MEN

CHAPTER I

A GENERAL VIEW OF MOSBY'S MEN

My friend and comrade, Joseph Bryan, of Company D, now of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch,* used to say that he never indulged in war reminiscences except to auditors who had themselves had experiences, because he feared that his reputation for veracity would not stand the strain. If he, who is recognized as the very soul of truth, albeit he is vested with the liberty which is accorded to newspaper men, should feel such sensitiveness, I may well hesitate to commit myself to posterity in the following pages.

The grounds of my apprehensions are, that actions which were natural and mere matters of course under conditions which then prevailed, would be impossible now; and, viewed from the standpoint of these "piping times of peace," they seem fantastic and incredible. It is hard to get the right perspective on them, and make due allowance for difference in times and circumstances. The great poet advised—

> "If you would view fair Melrose right,
> Go view it by the pale moon's light."

And so, there is a certain light—sentimental, artificial, if you choose—with which either narrator or hearer must invest these scenes of long ago if one would see the deeds and the actors just as they were. To those of us whose experiences cover that period memory brings back "the tender grace of the days that are dead." We must trust those of the rising generation to imagine that atmosphere of romance and chivalry which then pervaded the land, and in which only were possible the deeds which I shall attempt to recount.

The part which Mosby and his men played in the great war between the States was interesting, striking, and in many respects picturesque. Of the brilliancy and value of their achievements I leave the historian to speak; and he will find abundance of material for his work stored up for him by their enemies in the Records of the Rebellion. I shall attempt to present to you merely some pictures of the partisans in every-day life; showing how they lived and their relation to the people among whom they lived, the things they did and how they did them; so that you may judge what manner of men these were who have gained for themselves a peculiar place in history and song and story.

Of course my first object is to entertain you, and I have culled from quite a mass of material just those things which I think will please you most. At the same time, I hope to present the facts so as to lead you to true conceptions of my old com-

panions in arms, and to vindicate them from the unjust charges under which they have rested in some quarters, of being a band of ruffians and desperadoes. I confess that I had some such opinion of them myself, and when I left my home in the Shenandoah Valley in the spring of 1864 it was with the purpose of enlisting in the Black Horse Cavalry, among whom I had many friends. But as I passed through Mosby's Confederacy I tarried among these bold spirits, and "the hearts that they bore and the tales that they told" won me to their side. Of all the years that have come to me, the one which I rode with them brought to me the most of which I am proud.

Rough riders they were, as indeed they had need to be. For three or four hundred men to preserve their organization for years in an open country within fifty miles of their enemy's great capital, and escape capture by the armies which surrounded them and constantly traversed their territory; for them to dispose themselves so as to be at any given time, to all intents and purposes, at every point on a circle about them, and keep forty thousand of their enemies back from the front actively and anxiously engaged in watching them: all this required pretty lively equestrian exercise. The most active among them had several horses apiece, and their only respite from the saddle for days and days would be at the bivouac and short halts on the march. Fifty miles a day was no unusual ride; and I have known them

to make infinitely better time than that, for short distances—under the pressure of circumstances. The same party that prowled with Underwood among the Federal camps in Fairfax one night, would be galloping with Russell among Sheridan's wagon trains in the Valley before the rising of the second sun. The scout that crouched in the spray of the Great Falls and assured himself that "all's quiet along the Potomac to-night," to-morrow would dream of home and loved ones on a grassy bank while the Shenandoah lulled him with her murmurings to her kindred stars.

Desperate fighters some of them were; but this, too, was largely of necessity. Real hard fighting was often the only alternative to disaster.

> Some there were "who loved the bounding
> Of barbed steeds that bore them to the fray";
> The grim, tense hush, the war cry sounding,
> The headlong charge, the dark melée;

but I believe that none of them pursued fighting as a healthful recreation. While waiting in position for a fight, I have known the best of them to sicken and tremble with nervousness, caused not so much I think by fears for themselves as anxiety about the work that was before them. "Killing men is a painful business," and to sit quietly in cold blood and contemplate it is a fearsome thing. But at the first shot fired one could see the whole line brace itself, and with the wild hurrah that sounded a charge the thin veneering over men's native savagery would

crack and burst. There is no thrill like that which strains the soul in the onward rush of battle; no ecstasy on earth like that with which one sees the foe shiver, break, and run. Of course men lost their company manners in the crush and tug of a hand-to-hand fight, and human life was cheap. I believe Ben Palmer was the only man of whom I ever heard who could preserve the amenities to the point of killing a foe with apologies for his rudeness, and going through a captive in the graceful form of a request for "whatever surplus Federal funds he might have about his person."

In the delirium bred by the pistol crack and the smell of powder smoke and the sight of blood, I've seen the gentlest men do desperate deeds—things of which they were incapable in their civilized condition. Let brave men judge each other about these matters.

I believe, too, that Mosby's men often affected dare-deviltry, for the same reason that some folks nowadays assume honesty—it was the best policy. We banked heavily on the maxim that "the boldest front oftenest wins the fight," and all of our tactics were pervaded by a distinct calculation of the awful odds there are usually in favor of the fellow who is hunting for a fight. The presumption is that he is fixed for it. So, when one was to come off we always sought the initiative, not only because that gave us the choice of time and position, but for the stronger reason, as dear old Harry Hatcher used

to put it, "Boys, everything depends upon getting the bulge on 'em." We acted under David Harum's version of the Golden Rule, "Do unto the other fellow as he would do unto you—and do it first."

If a charge was to be made we did not go into it in serried ranks and with orderly approach as if to impress the enemy with our awful dignity; but each man realized that the shorter the time from the start to the finish the less the danger was, and would clap spurs to his horse, often throw the bridle rein on its neck, and with pistol in each hand bend every energy to getting there, and making himself as numerous and influential as possible on the way. Of course nothing ever resisted such onsets—not even infantry behind a fence, as at Rectortown, nor dismounted cavalry in a block-house, as at Warrenton Junction. An infantryman captured in such a charge was asked what made them break. "Why," he said, "you fellows came so quick we hadn't time to think, and besides, if we had shot the men off, the crazy horses would have run over us." The story went that Colonel Mosby called Lieutenant Hatcher to book for making that charge, but the brave, bluff fellow's defense was, "Well, Colonel, you told me to make a demonstration to get them from behind that fence, and if that didn't mean charge 'em, I don't know what it did mean." You see, such operations were against all tactics, and the very insanity of the thing—apparent or real, I've never determined

which—insured its success; and I think this was true of many things that the Rangers did.

Major Forbes complained bitterly of our "irregular" treatment of his crack California battalion. He had formed his well-appointed and thoroughly disciplined veterans in magnificent battle array on a hill in an open field and awaited our attack with all the confidence of the proficient commander of an invincible machine. *His* program was that we should charge him in front up the hill in solid column and receive the volleys from his drilled platoons, a procedure the exigencies demanded and the books authorized. But we were not out illustrating Hardee's tactics that afternoon, and our helter-skelter race for his front put our killers into his ranks and we got down to smashing his beautiful machine before it was in working order. The Major insisted, with tears in his eyes, that this was "unprofessional." Well, may be it was.

The truth is, we were an undisciplined lot. During the twelve months of my service I learned but four commands—fall in and count off by fours, march, close up, and charge. There was another movement with which we were not altogether unfamiliar, an order technically known as the "skedaddle," but I never heard the command given. The Rangers seemed to know instinctively when that movement was appropriate, and never waited for the word; and I want to tell you that this is a highly strategic movement which I have never known to

be appreciatively discussed by any military critic. You see when the Yankees broke they would always run in a bunch, and all we had to do was to follow and pick them up. For instance, out of the California battalion of three hundred which we broke up at Mount Zion, only five or six escaped. When we routed Blazer's hundred and fifty at Myerston only two, according to the War Records, ever reported for duty. But when we found it necessary to leave the scene of action, each man worked out his own salvation and "struck for home and fireside" by his own particular path. We dissolved like the mist "before their wery eyes wisibly" and left them nothing to follow.

Perhaps the successful execution of these movements, or any execution save utter demoralization, was possible only with men of our peculiar training. When not under the immediate command of the officers, each man was his own commander, commissary, quartermaster and everything else. He was dependent upon his own resources for supplies and his own wits for safety. In the enemy's country, too, such a life made him watchful, alert, and self-reliant. It developed in the men a strong individuality which made them feel personally responsible for results, and made them more than mere automata to be maneuvered by commands of officers. They seldom lost their heads, and when thrown upon their own resources were usually equal to the emergency.

These same conditions also demanded that the men should be expert in the use of their weapons. Uncle Sam's ordnance department supplied them abundantly with ammunition and much of it was consumed in target practice. This deadly aptness with the revolver not only reacted on our men and gave them nerve and self-confidence, but it increased their efficiency and formidability to a degree that one can scarcely appreciate until he stops to think about it. It is one thing to shoot for the purpose of making smoke and noise, to shoot at random, or automatically in volleys; it is an awfully different thing to shoot to kill. Believe me, a calm, cool "dead-shot" behind a Colt's revolver or a Spencer repeating rifle has more moral force than a gatling gun. The average soldier has an unconquerable prejudice against a pistol which he knows is going to hit somebody when it goes off, and he just will not go to meet it. You must reckon with this characteristic when you undertake to account for some of the exploits of Mosby's men, for it was an important one. It will explain the extraordinarily large number of the enemy killed and wounded as compared with the number of prisoners taken (a fact which has been urged as proof of our brutality), and it will enable you to understand how small squads of Rangers over and over again discomfited, or at least stood off, large bodies of men, even regiments. A half dozen such "dead-shots" across a narrow defile, especially if their number were not positively dis-

covered, could hold up a road full of Federals almost indefinitely. Allow, too, for the Federal soldier's mortal dread of decoys and ambuscades, of which he often had bitter experience, and you will appreciate the following story of how one lone ranger held up a whole regiment on an open turnpike, in broad daylight; how he caused them to advance upon him in regular line of battle with skirmishers deployed, and finally rode away from them, more or less at his ease.

This young fellow was convalescing from a wound, and had so far recovered that one spring morning his "fancy lightly turned to thoughts of love" and he rode down the turnpike from Middleburg to Dover to call on some ladies. Our command had gone down the same road the day before on a raid into Fairfax, and he had reason to believe that he was the only military body in the neighborhood. So, when he raised on a swell in the road to a plateau about two hundred yards long and saw a file of horsemen ride on to it at the other end, there was a moment of mutual surprise. His first thought was that it was the vanguard of our own command returning; but he instinctively halted and drew his revolver. When the four horsemen dashed toward him, yelling and shooting, and others came rushing into sight, he took in the situation. He knew that a long, hard chase was before him. But as he turned his horse for the start he concluded he would offer a suggestion to his pursuers not to crowd him too

unceremoniously. He lingered a moment until they came within pistol range, and fired. One of them fell to the ground, and the other three, recognizing the force of his argument and yielding to that prejudice which I have mentioned, promptly jerked up their horses. As the ranger galloped down the hill again and for a moment disappeared from the sight of the enemy, he recollected that his horse had cast a shoe and realized that a race on the metallic road was almost hopeless of escape. He determined to take the chances of turning into a lane which opened ahead of him, but rode for a distance of several hundred yards at an acute angle with the pike, which brought him in some degree nearer toward the enemy. As he sped across this space, sure enough, he got a broadside from a squad of carbineers who had gathered on the plateau, but safely reached the turn in the road and a hollow alongside of some woods. With a sense of safety came the determination not to leave until he ascertained something more about the number and character of the raiders. Thereupon, he rode on a hill in an adjoining field and saw the road filling with Yankees. His reappearance elicited the attention of the long-range gunners, and, with a shout and a wave of his hand, he retired to another convenient body of woods. All these movements, perfectly guiltless of such design, evidently convinced the Federals that he was a decoy and that the woods were full of Mosby's men. In a short while he had the distinction of being

approached by a full regiment of Federal cavalry in magnificent battle line, with banners flying, and preceded by a line of skirmishers. But this was more honor than he was looking for that morning, and, under cover of the woods, he retired to surroundings more in accord with his modesty. But it has been one of the regrets of his life, he assures me, that he could not remain near enough to hear the remarks of his friends, the enemy, when they reached the woods and found no more serious engagement awaiting them than to frighten the birds from the bushes.

But it is time that I give you some sort of a personal introduction to the men in whose company you are asked to spend a while. They were, for the most part, young men in the very flush and prime of youth. Many of them were beardless boys, whose looks were far more suggestive of the nursery than of the war-path, and I fear that not all of them were model Sunday-school boys, either. Most of them had run away from their homes to join Mosby, and I recollect that the thing which pleased them most was their chieftain's commendation of them when asked what in the world he did with such children. "Why," he replied, "they are the best soldiers I have. They haven't sense enough to know danger when they see it, and will fight anything I tell them to."

But these boys were, in a very material sense, veterans before they joined the command. Reared upon the border, they had passed the most impres-

sionable time of life amid the scenes which attended the flooding and ebbing of the tide of war about their homes. They had become familiar with war in its darkest phases, and acquainted with the enemy in his strongest and weakest points. Armies had marched and countermarched about them; battles had been fought around them; their homes had been pillaged and burnt before their eyes; scouts and spies and deserters were their familiars; they had become experts in running pickets, and securing and conveying secret information. In short, they had learned a whole lot of things which are not down in the standard books on the culture of youth, but which admirably fitted them for partisan warfare. Not a few of them had already made tests of their qualifications, and presented themselves for enlistment already mounted and equipped with the fruits of their experiments. I recall that my own charger —a spanking fine one—was a more or less voluntary contribution from Uncle Sam. I had the distinguished honor of riding him through the streets of Warrenton with General Torbert and his staff about dusk one evening. By sunrise the next morning we were in Mosby's Confederacy.

A large number of our command were veterans from the Regular Army who had either served out the term of their enlistment or had become disabled for that service, and many of them had already distinguished themselves in that field. Most of our earliest officers were men from the army who, upon

some occasion of service with him, had attracted Colonel Mosby's attention by their bearing, and he had secured their transfer to him by promoting them to officers. On the other hand, many of our privates had been officers in the army; high-spirited fellows who chafed under the monotony of army life and were attracted by stories of our adventures to resign their commissions and join our ranks. And so it happened that captains were about as plentiful in our command as colonels are now in civil life. I recall two captains, Kennon and Dee Shane, from the celebrated Louisiana Tigers, who joined us as privates upon the extinction of that regiment. One can hardly estimate the benefits which the discipline and experience of this class of men brought to our band of amateur soldiers.

Then, too, we had some grim old sires who had neared or passed their third score year, and whom the merciless laws of war relegated to their homes. But the ruthless hands of those who knew no laws had made their homes only dark spots of desolation, or had put upon them some deep affront that set on fire even the sluggish blood of age. These were men who had some grievous wrongs to avenge, and their implacable and unwavering hate furnished a kind of conservatism to the younger and, perhaps, more erratic spirits.

Altogether, it was peculiarly adapted material which Providence sent to our brilliant young leader; and his wonderful genius manifested itself as much

in understanding and handling his men as in recognizing and rising to the opportunities which came to him. He knew each man personally, and seemed to read him at a glance and ascertain exactly what sort of fellow he was and exactly what use to make of him. He mingled with his men, rode with them, slept with them and fought side by side with them. Few members of the command had a longer list of wounds and captures than himself, and fewer still perhaps were responsible for more personal execution. His care against needlessly exposing them; his great skill in securing them every possible advantage; his cool, quiet courage and the almost unvarying success of every enterprise which he personally conducted secured the perfect confidence of his men. His ready sympathy with them, which in hours of relaxation or in times of suffering revealed his big and tender heart, inspired them with an affection for him which has survived the vicissitudes of the years and is no less strong now because mellowed by the rays of life's setting sun.

It has been flippantly said, "The command was held together by the cohesive power of spoils." The truth is that it was gathered, held together and shaped for its destiny by the personality of its leader. Those whom he failed to impress, and in this sense magnetize,—in other words, those who failed to respond to his personal influence,—he simply sent back to the regular service. Between his command proper and himself there was a perfect rapport, and

they delighted in working together. I think the most potent inspiration to honest service and gallant action was the knowledge that each man's standing was accurately known by our commander, and the ambition to hold his esteem amounted to a passionate devotion. One of his veterans holds no prouder memory than that of having been spoken of by Mosby as "one of my best men." At the same time he was absolutely imperious, and no one cared to provoke the second time his trenchant disapproval. It is claimed that he had officers who were nearly, if not quite, equal to himself, and to whom the honor of many of his achievements belongs. If it be true, there is not one of them who will not proudly claim that his gracious chieftain discovered and developed him. The truth is that Mosby conceived a plan of warfare, sought and found a favorable theater, attracted and made the most of suitable men, and with them worked out his conception to glorious results.

We differed from the Arabs in that we had no tents to fold when we "silently stole away," and no place to put them if we had them. The establishment of a camp would have been immediately reported to our enemies; and to have kept the command together at one place for twenty-four hours would have been tempting annihilation. When on raids the skies or spreading trees were our canopies and the green heath, or a rock pile, or even a snow bank our acceptable couches. When it rained we

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Forty-third Battalion Virginia Cavalry

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usually let it rain, and spent no anxiety except to keep our powder dry, likewise our tobacco.

When off raids we boarded about at farm-houses, two or three of us, and sometimes half a dozen at one place. Our homes were known to Colonel Mosby, and generally to each other. When a meet was desired, one which had not already been appointed at the last disbanding, word of the time and place would be sent to one house and the men who were there would bear it to others, from whom it would pass on with promptness and certainty. In this way a hundred men could easily be rendezvoused in a few hours; or certain numbers gathered at different points at the same time for simultaneous sorties; and in a comparatively short time the whole command could be massed at a given point. This gave a mystery and weirdness to our operations which were not without effect on the enemy. And this is how it happened that after one of his successful "skedaddles" Mosby was recorded in the War Records as driven from the country one day, and the next day reported as "dealing damnation around the land" in a half dozen different places.

That was a pleasant fiction, that story about our being "featherbed soldiers." The men slept in old huts or shacks hidden away in the woods or in rock breaks and fence corners. The greatest hardship of the service that I can recall was spending a cold winter evening in the cheer of a glowing fire and brighter eyes and at bedtime riding a mile or more

away to chilling couches on the lee side of a big rock, or at best snuggled up under a straw rick. A fire would have been a beacon to guide a band of raiders to our side. Those who let their luxurious tastes get the better of their discretion usually rolled out of their downy beds on to bunks in a Yankee prison. Indeed, the most righteous in this regard were often scarcely saved. I have even yet a vivid sense of an exhilarating "eye opener" to which I was treated one morning on arising from my dewy couch beside a stone fence, when I discovered that a column of Federals had marched along the other side during the night.

As to the commissary. We would start on a raid with a few sandwiches in our haversacks, a supply which usually lasted over the first night out. After that we were dependent upon the generosity of the people along our line of march, and adopted a method which, from the character of the rations most frequently secured, was technically known as "pie-rooting." But the results of this were very precarious, and confined to those who were most energetic and pushing. The majority of us had to tighten up our pistol belts and turn for comfort to the inevitable pipe. And oh, that pipe!

How oft do I sit in the light of my firewood
And call back those scenes from the long vanished years,
While I breathe through my Powhatan, Meerschaum or Briar-wood
The breath of the weed that soothes while it cheers!

But, ah me, in spite of my utmost endeavor
With Pride of Virginia, Lone Jack or Bob White,
I can never call back the dear lost flavor
Of the pipe that I smoked on the march in the night:
The old wooden pipe, the battered burnt pipe,
The pipe that I smoked on the march in the night.

I may dream in the clouds of a fragrant Havana
When roses and dew drops smile back at the moon,
And the breezes that float up from vale and savannah
Are laden with perfume of hay newly mown,
But in vain do I long for that subtle aroma
That pulsed through my senses in throbs of delight—
The pungent, pervading, ineffable scent, from a
Pipe that was smoked on the march in the night:
An old wooden pipe, a cracked clay pipe,
Any old pipe on the march in the night.

But at our homes we fared verily on the riches of the land. The loyal, generous people of Fauquier and Loudoun opened their hearts as well as their homes to us. A genuine affection inspired the many little offices which softened the roughness of a soldier's life, and it was with an actual sense of defending home and loved ones that more than one Ranger laid down his life on the threshold of his host. When we started on raids farewells were spoken with moistened eyes and in broken words, and the soldier knew that if he were brought back on a bloody bier there would be gentle hands to lay him to his rest, and some quivering lip to "kiss him for his mother."

This constant recurrence to the amenities of social life kept the soldier to his best, and always under the inspiration of *noblesse oblige*. The influences of home life were about him. His standing and deportment as a soldier were public property, and

his sensitiveness to what those among whom he lived thought of him did more to urge him to gallant deeds than did even the *esprit de corps,* which indeed was very high. None understood this better than Colonel Mosby, and he took care that each man's excellences should be duly reported where they would do the most good. The women of Mosby's Confederacy were the divinities to whom the Rangers were always true; and the chorus to their favorite battle song was,

> "At home bright eyes are sparkling for us,
> We will defend them to the last."

And right here I wish to put on record a fact which I have frequently stated in public, and it has never been gainsaid. It speaks volumes and volumes for Mosby's men. Notwithstanding their admission to the very inner circle of their entertainers' homes; notwithstanding the relaxation of rigid forms which necessarily obtained, and the consequent freedom of social intercourse; although many of them were far from their homes and the influences which usually restrained men—never have I heard of a single instance of the betrayal by one of them of a too-confiding woman's trust.

But I must continue to use the plural when I speak of each man's "divinities." If it is not good grammar, it is true—like Ben Jonson's poetry that didn't rhyme. The fact is that the boys were guilty of considerable laxity (or perhaps I should say

liberality) in the matter of sweethearts. Their devotion to the sex was too ardent and profound to be exhausted by a single object, and they could not be absolutely loyal to Katie Wells and Gentle Annie both. The most that I can claim for a real Mosby man is that he could be perfectly "happy with either dear charmer, with t'other dear charmer away"—and this seemed to satisfy each in her turn.

Indeed, they were just as much sinned against as sinning in this regard. The dear girls took their liberties too. For instance: After the Greenback raid, the boys were pretty flush. Among other means which two of them took to get the good of their money before they died, they sent across the Potomac for engagement rings for their best girls. Now it happened that they sent by the same blockade-runner and he brought back two handsome bands which were exact "twinses." In due course and with all proper ceremony they were set as seals to the pure and endless love which they were intended to symbolize. The swains soon made an unexpected call together upon a certain lady, and you can imagine the satisfaction with which they discovered both rings on the same finger. Some embarrassment arose in the adjustment of relations, but as neither fellow could identify his property, the girl remained mistress of the situation and of the rings.

One belle of the Confederacy, a girl "of a provident mind," thought to hedge against the casualties of war by placing her bets, so to speak, judi-

ciously around—some in Mosby's command, and some in different branches of the regular service. She played to great luck, and after the surrender claimants for her heart and hand turned up from various directions. I happened to be at one of her levees (as a spectator) and could not but admire the skill with which she met the embarrassing situation and made each one happy in the assurance that he was the favorite. However, one of those accidents which will happen, betrayed the truth. Whereupon her victims held a caucus and unanimously passed a resolution that she was too smart for domestic purposes.

I recall another pair of belles who were twins, and as much alike as the two rings which I mentioned. They studied uniformity in dress and manners and played many pranks on the boys. Like those babes in Pinafore, they would get mixed up in a way that was utterly bewildering, and I have seriously doubted sometimes if they knew themselves apart. It was no uncommon thing for a Ranger to make an engagement with one which would be kept by the other, no less to his satisfaction because he didn't know the difference. And I have heard of their swapping escorts back and forth so often on a certain occasion that they themselves lost the run of the identities. One dashing young fellow of Company D fell in love with them. He didn't intend to love but one—but it amounted to the same thing as loving two. Finally he paid his addresses, and they were accepted, more or less. At his next call he was

received by the sister, whichever one that was; and when he essayed to take matters up where he had left off—well, he met with some discouragement. But when the other one was called in and denied "the soft impeachment" the situation became serious. So he determined to transfer his affections to another object, possibly less attractive but more easy of identification.

And now we turn to sterner scenes.

CHAPTER II

SECURING A MOUNT

During the summer of 1863 the Federal troops occupied Warrenton, Va. The camps of the Sixth Corps dotted the hills about the town, and General Sedgwick had his headquarters in what was then the John Smith house at the western end of Winchester street.

Just north of the town and scarcely beyond the camps was a long, narrow meadow. On one side a thin strip of woods separated it from the Centerville turnpike; on the other side a high hill hid it from the town and the neighboring camps, and at the lower end it was skirted by a large body of pines. Down the middle of it ran a bold stream of water on its way to Cedar Run, a mile away.

On the Cedar Run bottoms the pasturage was rich and in those times free to such of the town cows as had not been "confiscated." We were so fortunate as to have one at our house, and it seemed that my mission in life just then was to look after her. There were four or five other lads who were dedicated to the same high calling. I recollect Frank and Lytt Helm, Will Saunders and Frank Jennings as being in the party. And we surely did have grand times herding cows on Cedar Run that summer. We prac-

ticed soldiering, camping, raiding, running pickets, surprising camps, and such amusements as imaginative boys, imbued with the spirit of war and turned loose to themselves, would naturally run into. What we couldn't do we dreamed of, and vied with each other in concocting wild adventures and describing the things that we might do. The bubbles we blew under the old elms on the grassy bank may not have stood the tests of high art, but they were immensely fascinating. I wonder if they all did dissolve into air, "and left no wreck behind"? I sometimes fancy that Mosby afterward reaped some fruits from the spirit and education which we helped each other acquire those summer days. For every one of us, I believe, subsequently joined his command.

One beautiful afternoon I started from town to join my friends down on the creek. When I reached the meadow I saw a number of soldiers at the brook bathing themselves and washing out their clothes. Their horses had been turned loose, without saddle and bridles, to luxuriate on the rich herbage while the owners sought the next thing to godliness.

I stepped in the woods by the roadside and watched the scene. There were things about the bathers and their doings to interest a boy; but what most impressed me was their absorption in themselves. The horses seemed to have drifted out of their attention altogether, and one of them, especially, became the object of my intense interest. He had wandered some distance below his fellows, and

I noticed that he was a spanking fine one. How the curved lines of beauty in him were brought out against the green! How his dark brown coat glistened in the sunlight! My heart went out after that horse with a yearning; he stirred in me all that spirit of adventure which I had been cultivating at the cow-camp. He certainly was worth some risk —indeed, that element in the case appealed to me irresistibly, as I thought of what the boys would say if I should succeed in "acquiring" him.

The ethics of the matter did not bother me in the least. Indeed, I do not recollect that they rose out of my subconsciousness. Doubtless the question was fought out there, and it was downed in its incipiency by the knowledge of how many things the Yankees had taken from me and my people. Besides, if I were not then a combatant in actual service, I would become one as soon as I connected myself with that horse; and I was anticipating my rights very slightly.

He was near enough for me to see that he had on a halter, the strap of which was tied around one of his fore ankles, so as to keep him from running. I moved through the woods until I came within perhaps a hundred yards from him. I then fell upon my hands and knees, and even a little lower sometimes, into the high grass, and wormed my way to him. A few soothing words kept him quiet while I untied the halter strap from his foot. In the same posture as before, I slowly led him to the brook.

While he stood beside the bank and drank, I jumped upon his back, and with a few bounds we were within the shades of the pine woods beyond.

I do not think that any of the soldiers saw us. As I glanced over my shoulder toward them, I observed nothing to indicate that they were interested in us at all. They doubtless assumed that it was just some one who was crossing the meadow. What they thought when they came to round up their stock and found the brown gelding missing, was another story, a story which some of them may tell.

I hitched him away down in the pines, near a stream of water, and kept him there for a week. Each day I stole away from the cow-camp to carry him a bundle of grass and give him water, and cultivate him. I spent hours in rubbing and petting him; and you may believe that we became fast friends. In the solitude of those pines an attachment was formed which was, I think, a solace to both of us on many a weary night-march, and a comfort in hours of deadly peril.

But his nature demanded something more substantial than caresses; and one drink of water a day and only such grass as I could pack to him surreptitiously, scarcely met his needs. I saw that his beautiful form was pitifully shrinking, and noticed something more plaintive than regret in the wistful looks with which he would part with me. I had to get him to more satisfactory quarters. How to do

it was, you must admit, a pretty serious proposition to a sixteen year old boy, under my conditions.

Well, of course I laid awake at nights over it. I thought of little else through the day. Thought and nerve and imagination were at highest tension to devise a way to save that horse.

One day I heard my aunt, Mrs. Sowers, say that she was anxious to visit Middleburg, a village some twenty miles north of Warrenton. She had an ambulance and one horse; what she lacked was another horse and a driver. She was staying at Mrs. Spilman's, near General Sedgwick's headquarters, and he had established quite friendly relations with the family. Here was my chance.

I took her into my confidence, and it was arranged that she should secure the necessary pass from General Sedgwick, and I would do the rest. Inasmuch as the weather was warm and traveling in the early morning so much more pleasant, I insisted that we should start sometime before day-break. My real object was to pass through the pickets while it was still too dark for them to see the U. S. brand on my horse.

Our cow was not brought up that evening. Instead, I rode out on the Centerville pike about dusk on a bareback horse, with only a halter to control him. My plan was to sneak him into my aunt's stable in the twilight. As I reached the pike a squad of cavalry was halted there. My heart went down to where my boots ought to have been. But they

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evidently took me for some hanger-on to a cavalry camp or an officers' mess, and paid no attention except to chaff me as I rode quietly past them.

The court-house at Warrenton stands on a high hill facing the Centerville pike, and in front of it sweeps Winchester street, the main street of the town, leading to General Sedgwick's headquarters and my aunt's house. At the foot of the hill an alley turns at an acute angle out of the pike, up a steep and rough way to Winchester street. When I reached this alley I was shocked to find a Yankee sentinel there. He promptly ordered me to halt. But I could not, as he saw for himself. My horse shied from him up the alley. I pulled hard on the halter strap and called him vociferously to stop; but he seemed to pay more attention to my off heel which was hammering his flanks, and before the sentinel and I could come to an understanding we had gotten so far from him that that "incident was closed."

But I butted into another one when I reached the top of the hill. The old residents of that period will recollect how General Torbert, with his staff, used to make dress parade through town every evening. Just as I landed into Winchester street, the gorgeous parade was passing. 'Tis true that I did not add much style to the procession, but, with the impudence of a boy, I fell in behind and nobody objected. I did myself the honor of riding with General Torbert's staff through the streets of Warrenton, as far as the gate into Conway Grove, through which I

quietly dropped, and stabled my steed. He surely got a good feed that night.

We started out of town betimes the next morning, according to program, and by high noon drove into the capital of Mosby's Confederacy.

I don't know what sort of a record my horse had made under the Stars and Stripes; but he did make a dandy partisan ranger.

CHAPTER III

MY FIRST RAID

In my initiation into partisan warfare I think I took more than one degree. At any rate, my first raid gave me several characteristic experiences. About thirty-five or forty of us met at Hooper's blacksmith shop near Middleburg one bright April morning in 1864. After our horses' feet had received necessary attention from that master of the craft and such of our men as could assist him, we moved off to a retired farm-house, where we remained until afternoon. When the sun "got tangled in the grape vines," as the darkies used to describe that time of the day when the longed-for evening seemed to tarry, we moved out on the road toward Fairfax County where the Federal camps were located.

Mosby's men on the march always made a picturesque appearance; but the effect upon my boyish mind that afternoon was simply fascinating. As we moved along the dusty highway or made a short cut across the fields; over hill, through dale; now in the broad glare of the sun, now in the delicate shade of the woods just putting on their spring verdure—I sat silent on my horse, trying to shape the thousand emotions that crowded me. Sir Walter Scott's tales of border wars had been the food of my

youthful imagination, and perhaps they stirred some of the old Moss-trooper's blood which slumbered in my veins. However it came about, my imagination was keenly active. Each man was a study to me as he passed or repassed me, now moving to the front, now dropping to the rear in the go-as-you-please march, or paused to crack a joke with the new recruit.

And a motley crew they were. There rode a boy whose pink and white cheeks were guiltless of down, and beside him an aged sire whose reverend gray locks, straggling from beneath his cocked hat, made pitiful protest against the companionship in which they found themselves. Side by side rode the planter's son and the overseer's boy; the banker dressed in soft officer's gray richly trimmed with gold lace, and the poor adventurer whose suit of Union blue betrayed his dependence upon "the spoils of the chase."

One spirit of devil-may-care hilarity seemed to possess them all. The merry song, the jovial laugh rang out along the line, jest and joke followed amusing anecdote; and now and then a group would bunch together to listen to some old veteran's tales of the regular service or of prison life. This was one of Jim Sinclair's specialties, and the Colonel would often summon him to the front and call for some favorite yarns.

This levity struck me at first as being singularly out of place. Here rode these men on the most

serious business that could engage human enterprise. But a few short hours, at most, were between them and the terrible charge, the deadly encounter and, for aught that any knew, death. Yet they rode on to it

"Like some gudelie companie
To a midnight revelrie."

My young spirit soon caught the contagion, and I laughed with the loudest and jested with the merriest. Surely, soldiering with Mosby must be the jolliest life in the world!

As the shades of night fell "a change came over the spirit" of the entertainment. The jests were still bandied, but they seemed to be put with more delicacy; the tale was still told to eager listeners, but it was more fitted for a lady's bower. The songs that had rolled forth in quaint melody from knots here and there, or some solitary singer down the line, were hushed; and from the choir which had assembled at the head of the column there came floating back upon the night plaintive music inspired by thoughts of home. Soon all other sounds had ceased and every ear was set to catch the strains. I saw more than one tear glisten in the moonlight as the voices of those who awaited our coming home seemed to echo the words of the song, now sung with a pathos I never heard elsewhere, "We shall meet but we shall miss him."

The song ceased, and a great sigh of relief seemed to go up from the body of moving men. Then a

merry tune was struck, the chorus caught up along the line, and we were the same light-hearted fellows as before.

I recollect that we had just emerged from the shadows of a forest and entered an old field when the sounds in front hushed and the word came down the line,

"Silence! Pass it back."

My heart jumped into my throat. This began to look like business. Instinctively my hand sought my gun. A grim old ex-Louisiana Tiger, who rode by my side, saw the movement and said, "Pshaw! we're just getting in hearing of 'em. Don't be scared."

I felt that I had betrayed my greenness, and was properly subdued. Nothing was now heard but the tread of the horses on the hard crisp turf—suggesting to my mind "muffled drums and funeral marches," and there came solemn thoughts, and my martial enthusiasm died away.

Directly my attention was attracted by some sounds on my flank, and I looked to see several dusky forms galloping toward us over a hill.

"There they are!" I cried excitedly, and in a twinkle my revolver was out and cocked. Nick Skeldon's hand was on my arm with no gentle pressure, as he growled,

"Don't be such a tarnal fool. They are our scouts. What the devil did you leave your mammy for?"

The question was a pertinent one, that's a fact,

and one that my own heart echoed with considerable unction.

The newcomers pushed to the front and made their communications to the Colonel. At once our line of march was changed and we struck, at single file, down through the thickest, darkest, loneliest pine forest in all that dreary country. This move was not very reassuring to me. Every dark tale of ambuscade that I had ever heard recurred to me with a force which nothing but my surroundings could have given it. Nor did the weird wail of a whip-poorwill, that every now and then came moaning up out of the pines, tend to soothe my nerves. But when the dismal hoot of an owl suddenly boomed out on the night, I well-nigh jumped from my saddle. At first I could not define the impression it made upon me. Ere long it was heard again, and just in front of us, as before. This time my fancy identified it, and I recognized in the hoarse "Whoo hoo" the signal of a Yankee vidette warning his fellows of our approach. And again and yet again, at seeming regular intervals and just in advance of us, the ominous croak was heard; and each time I felt more and more assured that the next interruption to the gloomy silence would be a volley from the bushes; and each time Nick's question repeated itself to me with increased force.

At length we reached a broom sedge meadow in which we dismounted and disposed ourselves to rest, letting the horses graze, *with* halters tied to our arms or legs, while the Colonel went off with Bush

Underwood to reconnoiter. He never took chances in matters of which he could make sure and, whenever practicable, personally verified the reports of his best scouts. Along toward morning he returned and roused us. A detail was left in charge of our horses, canteens, spurs, and everything that would jingle and make a noise, while the rest of us moved off in single file into the woods.

I shall never forget that grim and stealthy march. Creeping along through the deepest hollows and darkest shades; never a sound save the smothered tread of the men or the scream of a bird scared from its roost or the rustling through the bushes of some varmint aroused from its lair; moving awhile in one direction and then in another to avoid the videttes whom the Colonel had located—we kept on slowly but surely approaching our prey. Stalking one's fellow-kind is a grisly sort of business.

The silent and monotonous movement had beguiled me into a half-dreaming state, when suddenly I was aroused by the coughing of a horse and looked to see a dark mass looming up in the center of a small clearing that we had just reached. Fortunately, the horse's cough was a stubborn one, kept up for several minutes, and drowned the sound of our foot-falls as we circled half around the glade, still keeping the cover of the woods. Then it ceased and all was silent as the grave. I distinguished several horses out of the dark pile in front of us, and then took in the situation.

This was a Yankee picket post. Just then one of the men trod on a stick and it cracked beneath his foot. A quick voice called, "Who comes there?" and almost simultaneously with the challenge the sentinel fired his piece.

"Charge 'em, men!" the Colonel cried. And there were shots and yells and running men and snorting horses and the odor of much brimstone, of one kind or another, and—well, that's pretty much all that I know about the fight. Out of a hazy uncertainty whether I was on my head or my heels, there comes to me the recollections that I started into the charge with the others; that I struck the limb of a tree and knocked my hat off; that I even stopped to pick it up (think of it!) and that as I started on a few straggling shots were winding up the affair. And then I realized what a record I had made. I thought it would never do in the world to say that I had passed through my first fight without firing a shot, so, directing my pistol to where I thought the enemy ought to be, I fired the last shot of the occasion.

The surprise had been so complete that there was no opportunity for resistance. Our men were in among the prostrate forms of the Yankees before they were fairly awake, and they assisted some of them to unwind from their blankets. None of them escaped except the sentinel, who must have dashed away into the darkness before his gun had fairly exploded. We supposed that there had been no casualties upon our

side, until Welt Hatcher reported that he had come through the fight all right, because there wasn't any, but while he was standing on the bank after the thing was over "some d—d greenhorn behind him had let off his gun and shot him on the heel." I did not say a word.

We knew that if we lingered on the scene the man who had escaped would order something hotter than coffee for our breakfast. Therefore, hustling together the prisoners and their horses we hurried back to our own steeds and soon struck out for Loudoun without standing on the order of our going.

When we reached the Little River turnpike about twelve miles below Aldie without any signs of pursuit we felt practically safe. Colonel Mosby now left us to seek at some friend's house a cup of "blockade coffee," and the nervous strain on the men being relaxed, we sauntered on up the road indulging in felicitations on our success. We had taken nearly a prisoner apiece, each with the most approved arms, and also a splendid lot of horses. Some of the boys had already effected trades for the latter, in which the proverbially sharp Yankee had hardly come out even. For instance, Sam Alexander, a burly young Ranger carrying upward of two hundred pounds of weight to five and a half feet of length, had created much merriment on the march the day before by his impersonation of Sancho Panza on a diminutive mule. To-day he had discovered that the captive sergeant "fairly doted on mules" and had generously

exchanged his mule for the sergeant's handsome sorrel. Lieutenant Hunter was gratifying his next strongest passion to fighting by prancing along the highway upon a superb dappled gray for which he had negotiated his raid-worn hack. Alas, how soon was he to verify the Scripture about pride and a fall.

Nor were the barters confined to horses. My friend, Welt Hatcher, found a ready means of repairing the hole in his boot made by my ill-timed bullet, in a swap with a prisoner. And if he suspected me of being the author of his casualty, I am sure that I detected no malice in the beaming smile with which he called my attention to his new patent leather tops. In like manner, hats and even pants and coats changed owners, and if the material advantages were decidedly with the Rangers, I believe the prisoners scarcely regretted it, because of the excellent good humor with which their business successes inspired the captors. A striking illustration of the advantages of free trade!

It was a pity that the pleasant commerce should have been rudely interrupted, and a "change of the balance of trade" threatened, by a body of Yankee cavalry putting in an appearance in the pursuit of us. One of our men, who had stopped at a farmhouse for breakfast, was seen coming up the road at full speed, waving his hat and gesticulating. Lieutenant Hunter, ever alert, quickly straightened the boys out, hurried the prisoners and led-horses off up the road in charge of a detail, and made his dispo-

sition of the rest of us in anticipation of the news which our comrade was bringing. He reported the road full of Yankees close behind him. Indeed, the head of their column immediately hove in sight, about half a mile away. Now the proposition was, to hold them in check until those prisoners and horses could be gotten safely into the Bull Run Mountains, for Mosby's men were as energetic in securing their captures as they were enterprising in making them.

The country along there is broken—intersected by streams which are bridged only on the pike, accentuated by bold hills and interspersed with woods. After crossing Cub Run bridge the road climbs a hill for three or four hundred yards, and it was then skirted by woods nearly half way down. Some half dozen of our men, of whom the writer was one, were found to have carbines and they were placed in charge of Lieutenant Hatcher in the woods next to the bridge. As the advance files of the Federals rode on to the bridge these carbineers galloped out into the road and opened on them. At the same time Hunter appeared on the hill-top in our rear, filling the road with his men as if preparing for a charge. This sudden appearance of opposition brought the Yankees to a quick halt, and some empty saddles at the bridge admonished them to get out of the range of those carbines. While they were forming into line and deploying skirmishers we moved back to the hill-top, and taking station across the road just below the brow, we interested them while Hunter

moved his men back to another position a mile or more up the road. When we carbineers retired on our main body it was not altogether a race. Every now and then one of us would wheel, and the angry spit of his carbine warned the pursuers not to straggle into a chase. This kept them in a solid body, which could move only as fast as their slowest horses. When one of them, better mounted than his fellows, ventured to let out his horse, one or the other of them soon caught a hot bullet.

We came up with Hunter's men mustering about the edge of a piece of woods; and his movements, not understood by them, and his number still being undiscovered, again gave the enemy pause. When they had formed their line and deployed their skirmishers for another advance on him, he once more retired under the cover of the pit-pat of our carbines. And so the thing kept up, with variations, until we reached Aldie. By this time we were satisfied that our detail with the prisoners was far away and our hard-earned assets safely banked in the mountain fastnesses, and we determined to give our pursuers a cordial farewell.

At Aldie the turnpike makes a sharp turn around a spur of the mountain and at once crosses Little River over one of those narrow stone bridges. The enemy would have to cross it four abreast. In a meadow just west of the stream Hunter formed his two dozen men; and as the vanguard of the Yankees bolted around the mountain and across the bridge, he charged them. They recoiled for a moment, but,

being well closed up, their numbers simply crowded us out of that gorge in the mountain. Lieutenant Hunter's Yankee horse had fallen and thrown him; Lieutenant Nelson had been shot down in a desperate effort to remount him; Hatcher had been borne off from the front by the pressure of the crowd, and the boys, recognizing the propriety of the "skedaddle" movement, melted away like the morning mist.

The Yankees, too, seemed to have had enough exercise of that kind for one morning, and marched back to Fairfax with their lone prisoner, Lieutenant Hunter. The loss of him and the wounding of Nelson made a considerable price we paid for our twenty odd prisoners, though they did have such fine horses.

When I met Colonel Mosby the next day he seemed inclined to find fault with us for "running from those Yankees." Possibly he would have managed things differently if he had been there; but, for my own part, I have always felt that I never left anything to be desired in the way of adventure as long as I stayed with Harry Hatcher.

The pursuing party was commanded by Maj. Alexander G. Davis, whose home was near Aldie, but who had been driven into the Federal service by mistreatment on account of his Northern birth and proclivities. He was a perfectly fearless man, and developed quite an interest in Mosby and his men. Some months after this he and the Colonel met in a hand-to-hand fight and each was wounded desper-

ately. He was quite a gracious old fellow and has talked with me more than once about this adventure. He told me that when the news of our capture of the picket post was brought into camp he called for volunteers to go after us. In response to the call he gathered up more than two hundred of the most reliable and best mounted men in the camp, who went out on the chase in perfect assurance of bringing us back. He said that his great difficulty was in discovering our number and on that account he could not determine how to handle us. When I told him that there were less than thirty in the party that was opposing him, he politely said, "Well, I don't understand it at all"; but I felt that my standing for veracity, with him, was undergoing a strain.

CHAPTER IV

THE GUARD HILL RAID

About four miles north of Front Royal the turnpike from that place to Winchester passes over a high hill, thickly wooded. From a tradition that it was the site of an old fort for the protection of the early settlers of the Valley from the Indians, it has retained the name of Guard Hill. Here, in May, 1864, the Federals had posted a heavy picket, upon whom Colonel Mosby determined to make a call.

About a hundred of us assembled at Paris, a little village at the eastern base of the Blue Ridge, and crossing the mountain through Ashby's Gap we reached the Shenandoah River about nightfall. We found it so swollen by recent rains as to be past fording; and as swimming at night was impracticable, we retired to an old field on the mountain opposite Mount Carmel Church and put up for the night.

I well remember how that old field abounded in stones. Every fellow of us could have had a Jacob's pillow for his own, and doubtless did have visions, but not of angelic hosts. I recall how the horror of snakes kept me anxious all night, though, to tell the truth, I saw and heard of none. Speaking of snakes reminds me of something that has been a mystery to me since those days. Mosby's men often slept in

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such places as this, where the deadly rattler has his home; sometimes on the river bottoms, where the copperhead prevails; and habitually in fence corners or rock-breaks which the moccasin or black constrictor may be presumed to preempt, and yet I never heard of a Ranger being troubled by snakes of that variety.

The next morning we returned to the river and found it higher than the night before. But Colonel Mosby, who had crossed over in a skiff during the night and gone scouting ahead of us, had arranged to have such boats as could be found gathered at the ferry for use. With the half dozen batteaux which had been secured the men could soon be put over, but the horses were troublesome. The river here is nearly two hundred yards wide, and being flushed the current was pretty strong. A horse, like a Kentucky colonel, does not take kindly to water. We would start with one or two trailing after the skiffs, to act as sort of bellwethers for the others, which we would drive in after them, and with much difficulty we got most of them over in this way. But some refused to be driven in at all, while others would turn and come back as soon as they struck the strong current. These had to be taken over by their riders in a swim from bank to bank. At this time I learned a trick about swimming horses which I often had occasion to utilize on subsequent trips to the Valley. If the stirrups are crossed over the saddle the feet of the rider will be brought so high that the tops of his cavalry boots will rise above the water, though it

washes the horse's back. A man stooping in his stirrups with one hand on the saddle bow to steady himself and balance his horse, and the other drawing his rein gently to steady and guide his horse, can swim indefinitely without getting a thread wet. A necessary condition is that he keep cool, for his horse gets his nerve from his master; and the result of his getting rattled will be that the horse will lose his balance and both will get a ducking. Barring a few such casualties, we all got safely across the Shenandoah that morning. Then we rested under the grand old trees on the river bank and in Mr. McCormick's lawn, while our horses browsed in a convenient meadow. The hospitable doors of his mansion, too, were thrown open, and many of the boys renewed or established pleasant relations with his four or five attractive daughters. And during the day all of us found our way to the dining-room, where a substantial luncheon was provided by these gracious folks and their neighbors who had learned of our presence. It was wonderful how these Valley people could always find something for Mosby's men to eat, even during that dark time when Sheridan had well-nigh made good his boast that "a crow that flew over the Valley would have to carry his rations with him."

Late in the afternoon a message came from Colonel Mosby, and we marched off by unfrequented by-roads across the country toward Front Royal. Dark overtook us long before we reached a secluded glen

at the foot of Guard Hill, where we found the Colonel awaiting us. As soon as he assured himself that we all were in ship-shape he took Capt. Sam Chapman and four or five others and went off to reconnoiter the picket and locate the videttes. It was while on this scout that he met with quite an interesting adventure, in which he exhibited his characteristic quick wit and nerve.

While he and his party were standing in front of a house on the pike, where he had stopped in quest of information, they saw in the starlight a squad of cavalry approaching from the direction of Winchester. This was the patrol on its rounds. When they got within hailing distance they stopped and inquired of our party who they were.

"Friends, with the countersign," Colonel Mosby replied, with the best Yankee twang that he could improvise.

"One of you advance, then, and give the countersign," was the response.

"No," said the Colonel, "you are coming from the direction of the enemy. One of you advance."

This was a correct proposition, so one of them rode forward. When he came up the Colonel said to him in a low, terribly distinct voice, as he leveled his revolver at him:

"Give the alarm, and you are a dead man! I am Mosby. Now call to the others that it is all right, to come on." And he did so; and five more of Uncle Sam's gallant defenders marched confidently up to

the muzzles of as many revolvers and quietly surrendered.

With these prisoners and the information which he had gathered, he returned to us. He told us, as a piece of good news, and to encourage us for the attack, that the picket had been reinforced that day, so that there were two hundred Yankees there instead of one hundred, as we first thought, and he added, with a grim humor, "Now we'll get two horses apiece instead of one."

It was now getting along toward daybreak. You know the old adage, "the darkest hour is just before dawn." We had a corresponding theory that men sleep soundest then and we usually made it a point to time our night attacks accordingly. Captain Chapman was put in charge of six or eight carbineers afoot and ordered to march straight down the pike until he came to something, after which his movements were left to his own discretion, to be guided by circumstances which the Colonel proposed to help develop with the mounted men. I had a carbine and fell into Chapman's detail. After reaching the turnpike we did not go far before the exercises opened. Directly we saw some men in front of us and were ordered to halt. We responded with a volley and jumped out of the road among some bushes which covered a recent clearing. The Yankees could not distinguish our numbers, and I am sure that, as in obedience to Chapman's orders to charge them, we rushed through those bushes, shoot-

ing and yelling like Modoc Indians, while our mounted men could be heard thundering down the pike, the enemy thought that a whole brigade was on them. At any rate, they promptly broke for bushes too, hardly firing back at us, and when our cavalry came up they found us sharpshooters in possession of the picket camp and running around among the tethered horses. Indeed, I fear that our impetuous Captain rather over-did our part, or that the Colonel failed to develop his circumstances with sufficient promptness for us to play to them. Instead of merely flushing the game for the mounted men to catch it, we drove so many of them out of reach into the darkness that only about sixteen of them were overhauled. I think, though, that we secured nearly every horse on that post, numbering about seventy.

We ascertained afterward that the picket had been divided, and the larger section, with the commissioned officers, had been camped as a reserve, some half a mile farther in, and we did not reach them at all. On this account the Colonel's promise of two horses apiece did not materialize—but we got everything that was in sight.

It seems that there had been some rioting at this outpost the night before, and when Captain Auer heard the sounds of our attack he took for granted that it was another outbreak of his own men's hilarity, and while we were waiting on the road to gather ourselves together, here he came dashing up in a fine

frenzy, demanding "what the blankety blank all this fuss means?" "It means that Mosby has got you," a Ranger explained, as he emphasized his explanation with an appropriate movement of his revolver.

The Captain was so shocked that it took him a moment or two to gather sufficient breath with which to whisper hoarsely, while the whites of his eyes expanded in the morning gloaming, "Well, this beats hell, don't it?"

I said the Yankees might have thought that Imboden's brigade was attacking them. In fact, they had some reason for thinking so. As we were rushing through the bushes Phil Lee thought to impress them by whooping out at intervals in his foghorn voice, "Hurrah for Imboden!" The ruse may have accomplished what he intended, but it brought on him a characteristic reprimand from Colonel Mosby, who was not without some jealousy for his own laurels. He told Phil that, like Peter, he had denied his master, and he had half a mind to send him to Imboden, of whom he seemed to think so much. But there was, like Peter's also, only a temporary fall from grace, and he never after had occasion to doubt Phil's loyalty.

Possibly a further effect of it was that the enemy attempted no pursuit of us, and we rode quietly back home with our captures. To facilitate this, however, we divided into two parties, one of which found a pretty deep but safe fording high up the river at Howellsville and the other got across somewhere lower down.

CHAPTER V

IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

About daybreak one morning in the summer of 1864, Bush Underwood aroused me from my slumbers, with an invitation to go with him on a scout about the neighborhood of Georgetown. We had gone into camp near Thoroughfare Gap late the night before, after which I had been on picket for a couple of hours, so I felt very little like taking the hard service which I knew would attend the proposed expedition, but when I learned that the party had been partially made up of such spirits as Charley McDonough, Hugh Waters, Harry Sinnott and Bill Trammell, I recognized the compliment of the invitation and accepted it.

The objects of the expedition were, generally, to gather information, and especially to "confiscate" a certain very fine stallion belonging to a Union man near Lewinsville.

Underwood's description of this horse, together with the very recklessness of venturing so far within the enemy's lines, offered attractions irresistible to a Mosby man. Accordingly, about sunrise a half dozen of us set out across the country in the direction of Georgetown.

By noon we were within the limits of danger, and fearing that our further progress by daylight might bring us in contact with a patrol or scouting party of the enemy, or even a straggling trooper whose discovery of our presence would thwart our expedition, we retired to a body of pines to await nightfall.

After dark set in we resumed our march. Underwood had been raised in that part of Fairfax County, and it was his boast that he knew its every rabbit-path, as well as the political sentiments of all its inhabitants. And his unvarying success in scouting that section seemed to vindicate his claim. He was one of those cold-blooded, clear-headed, nervy fellows who never got "rattled." Perfectly fearless, he was at the same time cautious and patient, and seemed to have a genius for just that sort of business. Therefore we implicitly followed his lead, though we soon heard on every side the noises from Federal camps and knew that the least accident or inadvertence might at any moment bring hordes of the enemy down upon us.

I suppose it was nearly bedtime when we approached a house where Bush said he could get some information that he wanted. While the rest of us remained with his horse under the shadows of the neighboring trees, he cautiously made his way to the rear of the dwelling. He soon returned with biscuits and sandwiches, which we proceeded "to put where they would do the most good," while he unloaded his budget of news.

He had learned that the prize horse (which, by the way, I believe to this *day was* a pure myth, conjured up by him to allure us) had been sent to Washington that afternoon. But he had ascertained the location of the various camps in the neighborhood, with the names and numbers of the different regiments composing them. This was invaluable knowledge to us.

Furthermore, he informed us that there was a certain house near the Little Falls of the Potomac which a number of Yankee officers from a neighboring camp were in the habit of visiting, the attraction being some very fascinating girls.

There was some debate among us as to whether it was exactly the fair thing to break up so interesting a party. But the chance of carrying back with us some Yankee shoulder straps, and possibly stars, not to speak of fine horses, overcame our scruples, and we determined to put in an appearance there during the evening, even at the risk of being regarded as intruders.

This house, however, was several miles away, and the road to it was not altogether as safe and open to travelers as it is to-day. Nor did we go very far before our adventures began. It was now considerably past midnight, and from the fact that we had been riding for some time within sound of the roar of the Little Falls I judged that we were nearing our destination.

We had been following our leader in perfect

silence, and I confess that my meditations were not altogether cheerful. Here we were, a half-dozen foolish boys, forty miles from our comrades, surrounded on all sides by enemies—military and non-combatant—and liable at any moment to stir up a hornet's nest.

Should our leader and guide fall in a night skirmish, or by any chance become separated from us, the brightest prospect that awaited us would be to ride humbly into the nearest camp, and take our chances as being received and treated as prisoners of war.

It turned out that I was not the only one in that party whose resolution was being "sicklied o'er by the pale cast of thought." Presently Hugh Waters, who was riding by my side, leaned toward me and said, in tones of becoming seriousness, "Johnny, I have got a presentiment. I feel that I am going to be killed to-night."

The fact is, I felt very much that way myself—and possibly I would have said it, if he had waited a little while. But he spoke first, and gave me the start on him. As much to hide my own weakness as to banter him, I answered,

"Oh, pshaw! that's all stuff. We'll be talking to pretty girls directly."

"Now, Johnnie, don't laugh at me. You know I am not afraid." (I wasn't so sure of that—judging him by myself.) "But I am serious; I know that I am not going to get home, and there are some things

I want you to attend to for me." Then he proceeded to make his will and appointed me his executor. He divided out his few assets—"the spoils of many a chase"—among his relatives and friends, no doubt very judiciously. Finally he came to the mare he was riding. She was a superb animal, handsome as a picture, and distinguished among the boys for her speed and endurance.

"And Bess," he continued, patting her upon the neck, "I want you to try and carry her out with you and give her to Mollie L."

This last request aroused my interest.

"Mollie L.?" I asked; "why, what's your reason for that?"

"Well, I suppose I will have to tell you, as it won't make much difference now." And his voice became a shade more doleful. "Well, the truth is, I am in love with her—and—she's my sweetheart!"

"The mischief you say! You are not engaged to her?"

"Yes, I am, Johnnie, old fellow. You see I had to tell you, although I promised her not to."

"By George! I am engaged to her myself!" I answered, an incipient feeling of rivalry imparting some warmth to my tones, perhaps, in spite of the solemn business we had in hand.

Just at this interesting point our conversation was interrupted by a pistol shot, and Underwood, who had paced some distance ahead of us up the hill which we were ascending, came dashing back, lying flat on

his horse. As we wheeled around our movements were expedited by some shots from a party of men who now appeared on the brow of the hill. They did not follow us very promptly, however, and after running a few hundred yards we pulled off into an old field and huddled behind a clump of bushes to await developments.

In a short while the squad of Federals, who, we supposed, were a patrol upon their rounds, passed leisurely along the road in front of us, and we picked up such scraps as these from their conversation:

"Where the devil did those fellows go?" "They couldn't have been any of Mosby's men away down here." "No, I guess they are a lot of Eighth Illinois boys out on a lark." "Well, we turned the joke upon them anyhow."

It was no little relief to us that they took this view of the matter. Nevertheless, the questions submitted to the council of war which we held after they had gone, were still very serious ones.

It would not be very late in the next day when they found out their mistake, and we might expect the country to be scoured by scouting parties. Especially would the situation be aggravated if we persisted in our project of raiding the house on the river. Had ordinary discretion presided at our council, doubtless we would have set out for home and safety, forthwith. But the fool-hardiness of the venture prevented any one of us from proposing a

backdown lest he be suspected of weakness—and we continued on our fatuous course.

Finally we reached the house we were seeking. Fortunately there were no dogs about the premises and we dismounted, and surrounded the dwelling without being discovered. Our knocking at the front door brought a head out of an upper window, and a female voice inquired who we were and what was our business.

"If there are any officers here, they are wanted at camp immediately," Bush replied.

"There are none here—nor soldiers either," was the answer. "But you can't come that over me, Bush Underwood. What in the world are you doing here?"

"Hello! that's Nannie Bell! What luck! Some of us boys are here, hungry as wolves. Come down and let us in."

Sure enough, she was an old acquaintance. But as we heard her steps descending the stairs, we took the precaution to cock our revolvers—for even ladies are not always to be trusted when there may be a sweetheart lost or saved. But she was "true blue"—or gray, rather—and, with the other ladies who soon joined us, gave us such comfort as the unreasonable hour of our call enabled them to offer. But they could not console us for the officers whom we failed to catch, and we soon rode away, decidedly crestfallen.

We were now decidedly of the opinion to strike

Loudoun forthwith, content if we should reach there with whole hides and our stock of adventures—still further to be added to—instead of the booty we had hoped for.

We soon reached the shelter of the Big Pine Forest; and for hours threaded its obscure and devious bridle paths in single file, turning and twisting and doubling, it seemed to me, long after all idea of distance or direction had been lost.

About noon next day we came to a clearing in which stood the humble abode of one of Bush's friends. They were but poor folk, at best; and I doubt not that, with the precarious means of tilling their sterile soil and the frequent harassments and depredations to which they were subjected, Hard Times kept a pretty constant "knocking at their cottage door." But they gave us a hearty welcome and we had no reason to suspect that the larder was low. Often have I recalled with gratitude and something of regret the sweetly cooked and daintily served ham and eggs and richly browned cornbread which that day greeted our keen appetites.

One of the sons of the family stood watch for us on the neighboring hill, and we ate, and baited our horses and rested in peace. After the refreshments, we took up our march toward the Dranesville pike, which we approached through the woods, and very cautiously, for we were still within the Federal lines, and liable to run against a patrol or scouting party.

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Besides, we were not without the hopes of picking up some unwary passenger along that highway.

We reached the pike safely, and tying our horses back in the pines a short distance, "laid for our luck" along the wayside.

One squad of cavalry did indeed pass along within ten feet of us, but their numbers secured them undisturbed right of way. A few moments after, a solitary straggler came jauntily along, sitting cross-legged on his horse and inquiring at the top of his voice, "Who will care for mother now?"

Harry Sinnott stepped out from behind a bush and informed him that, if he had no objections, we would take care of him; and he might reasonably commit the old lady to a kind Providence—or words to that effect.

This matter-of-fact, not to say rude response, evidently shocked his sensibilities; and before he recovered himself he had been fully introduced to our party. We found him not unworthy game. His money, jewelry and arms were divided out among the rest of us; while his horse was assigned to Charley and Bush, in joint ownership. Neither one of them, however, cared to have the trouble and responsibility of getting the other one's half back to Loudoun; so while the others of us kept watch, they produced the inevitable "deck" and sat down there by the roadside and played out a game of "seven up" to determine which should own the whole of the nag. Charley won, a result which some of us had reason to regret before we reached home.

By dark we had gotten well beyond the picket lines and into a section of country with which we all were more or less familiar. Here the prisoner was paroled and turned loose, and McDonough took possession of his hard-earned asset. Here, too, Underwood and Trammell went off on some affair of their own, leaving the rest of us to make our way home.

We came upon the Little River turnpike about five miles below Aldie; and as our horses' feet struck the paved road we felt that we were indeed "almost home." But when we stopped at a house on the roadside to get a drink of water, we noticed considerable restraint, to say the least, in the manner of the good lady, who was generally rejoiced to see Mosby's men. A few inquiries developed the fact that she mistook us for Yankees, a large body of whom, she informed us, had gone up the road that afternoon.

This news brought a change over our spirits and put us again on the qui vive. The night was very dark and a high wind was blowing. This made marching upon a road upon which we were liable at any time to meet the enemy returning, decidedly dangerous, but we were dead homesick and determined to risk it.

Sinnott and I rode about a hundred yards in advance of Charley and Hugh with the led-horse; and in order that they might have a better chance to escape in case of trouble, we carried our revolvers in our hands, ready cocked, and it was understood

that we should fire incontinently into anything we met.

We had ridden in this order more than a mile, and Sinnott and myself, riding closely side by side, had descended into a little vale, where the darkness could almost be felt. Suddenly our horses stopped. Straining our looks forward, we distinguished the forms of men and horses, just in front of us. Our horses and theirs had been stopped by touching noses.

Like a flash it came to me that they might be some of our own men, scouting; and instinctively I hailed them. But Sinnott, obedient to instructions, fired; and the response to my challenge was a groan, as the man opposite to him fe'l to the ground. It was no time now for the amenities of war; and the echo to the groan was the report of my pistol, and down went my vis-a-vis.

As we turned our horses pandemonium broke loose. The flashing of pistols threw a weird light on the scene, while the sounds of the arms and the shouts of men and clattering of horses' hoofs "made night hideous." I fired back once or twice as I ran, but found that my shots only betrayed my whereabouts, and drew the enemy's upon me. So I addressed all my energies to getting away from there.

When I came up to Charley he was dismounted in the road; and my horse striking Hugh's just as he was turning, laid him and his rider sprawling by the wayside. That was the last I saw of any of my

companions that night. As I subsequently learned, their experiences were as follows:

McDonough had been riding the captured horse to rest his own, and when the firing commenced he jumped down to change to his more reliable nag. Before he could mount the enemy was upon him. He had been outlawed by the Federal authorities for some desperate deed, and to him capture meant certain death. But with wonderful presence of mind he lay flat in the middle of the road, with pistol cocked and hand on trigger, ready to deliver that last shot which he always reserved for his own heart as the final alternative to capture. Poor fellow! before many months the awful emergency came, and he unfalteringly fired the fatal shot.

But that night he was spared, by the narrowest shave. The Yankees rode past him—one of them whose horse stumbled over him remarking that "there was one damned rebel they had killed." At the first opportunity he rolled out of their way and hied off into the darkness.

When Waters was dismounted in my unfortunate collision with him, he too crept out of the road, as the Federals came charging up, and lay quietly in the fence corner until they had gone by. Then he arose and made for the Bull Run mountains.

Their horses followed Sinnott down the pike and found a safe harbor in some citizen's close until they were reclaimed.

I turned off the pike, and, coming to some convenient thickets, spent the residue of the night there.

With morning light I made my way back to Mosby's Confederacy.

In the course of the afternoon I cleaned up, donned my "best blockade goods" and rode over to Mollie L.'s to seek in her gracious presence refreshment from my hardships.

Imagine my surprise at finding Hugh Waters already there, ensconced in the best arm chair, playing invalid over some bruises and scratches which he had incurred in his fall of the night before. But so far from their being a source of discomfort to him, the scamp was supremely blest in the gentle ministration which they were evoking from "Our Mutual Sweetheart."

He was evidently master of the situation; and "the subsequent proceedings interested me no more."

CHAPTER VI

THE POINT OF ROCKS RAID

Col. John Scott, in his "Partisan Life with Mosby," says that our attack on Point of Rocks, July 4, 1864, was intended as a diversion in favor of General Early in his operations in the Valley. I always had a suspicion that it was inspired by a grim sort of deference to "the day we celebrate." Certainly it was attended with all the usual accompaniments of a Fourth of July excursion, not excepting fireworks, confectionery and a sensational display of bunting. Special invitations, too, were issued to guests, and unusual attractions promised them; for our chief of staff, Joe Blackwell, and his chum, Bill Lake, of the Commissary, were along. They regarded themselves as belonging to a strictly non-combatant branch of our command, and had conscientious scruples against transgressing the limits of their sphere. Therefore, I opine that they were drawn with us by somewhat the same assurances of a picnic as gathered that historic army of civilians at the battlefield of Bull Run.

Point of Rocks is an important station on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, just across the Potomac from Loudoun County, and about twelve miles east of Harper's Ferry. It is named from the high promontory of solid rock in which a range

of mountains terminates so close to the river's bank that the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal barely squeezes past it, and the railway, just alongside, has to cut through it. West of this tunnel for miles up the river steep and rocky bluffs bind the railroad track on the north. East of the tunnel lies the village, and on the mountain slope back of the town and overlooking it, was the Federal camp. The only access to them from the west was along the narrow towpath between the canal and the river, and from that a wooden framed bridge arched over the canal into the middle of the little town, some four hundred yards from the tunnel.

The river here is at least a quarter mile wide, but is split about midway by a narrow island which, beginning opposite the mountain's end, continues up the river about a mile. At the head of the island is a ford passable for horses at ordinary low water. This day the river was very low. But when Colonel Mosby and one or two companions undertook to cross there, on his usual preliminary scout, they discovered a Yankee picket on the island who promptly opened fire on them. The command was then out of sight, and I presume that the Yankees gave no special significance to his presence there, as it was by no means unusual for occasional Confederates to make their appearance in that vicinity. He returned to us on the Waterford road, and called for sharpshooters. An unusually large number responded. Carbines were not plentiful with us, as a general thing. Directly after a fight we would

be abundantly supplied, and our houses were well stocked with them. But they were unhandy things to carry and as most of our fighting was at short range, where the revolver was used, comparatively few of our men encumbered themselves with these guns. There were always some, however, who carried them for the sake of extra chances for adventure which the possession of them sometimes brought to us. That morning I think there were at least two dozen of us who dismounted and followed Lieut. Ab Wrenn to the front, in the best of heart and anticipating high sport in sharpshooting across the river. Possibly, if we had known what awaited us, we would not have gone off with so much alacrity.

We made a rush across the river bottom and got places behind the big trees and fallen logs on the banks almost before the Yankees woke up to our presence. A few of them on the island hardly tarried to return our salutes to the holiday; and then, much to our surprise, Lieutenant Wrenn jumped into the river and called on us to follow. That was a feature of the entertainment that we had not costumed for, but not a man hesitated to take to water promptly.

In the mean while, our little mountain howitzer was run out on a river bluff behind us; and as we floundered through the water, shooting, yelling, stumbling over the round river stones and getting ducked overhead, rising and sputtering and firing again, the boom of our artillery proclaimed that the

celebration was on. It seems that, somehow, the fuse to the first shell had been cut too short and it exploded in our rear; and as the pieces fell in the water behind us we realized something of the situation which has been described as "between the devil and the deep sea"; and we pressed, if possible, more vigorously toward the enemy as the lesser of the two evils. But if our artillery excited us, it utterly demoralized them, and away they went. Some of them mounted their horses and sped down the river toward the Point of Rocks, others made their way over the canal lock and sought safety in the bushes on the river bluff beyond the railroad. These were joined by a party of excursionists from Washington who had steamed up the canal in a launch on a Fourth of July outing, and as the mixed lot of soldier and civilians scrambled up the steep hillside, they were indifferently targets for our sharpshooters. When a poor fellow, overtaken by a bullet, would roll back down the cliff, whether in blue or in summer jeans, it aroused the same sort of stir in the blood as that with which the ardent sportsman sees the flying game fall to his shot. This sounds savage, doesn't it? Well, it is human nature in war.

The mounted men had followed us closely and they got across the river before we landed, but they dashed off down the tow-path, leaving us to wait for our horses to be brought over to us, which were, somehow, unaccountably delayed. In the mean while, we proceeded to investigate the excursionists'

boat which lay in the canal lock, and we found its contents worthy of the occasion. Those fellows were out for a good time. The choicest brands of liquors and cigars and various kinds of dainty foods were consoling us for our wetting, when a railroad train hove in sight from the direction of Harper's Ferry. We hurried from the boat and arranged ourselves alongside the track to receive it in due form. Just then another shot from our howitzer came whistling across the river. The engineer immediately reversed his engine. We saw the train slowing up and rushed toward it in order to board it, but the engineer, who did not lose his head for a moment, succeeded in getting his train under way, and we were disgusted to see it move off before we got up to it. But you ought to have seen the passengers pile out of it while it hung on the turn, and take to the bushes on the bluff! A shot or two fired after them, purely in sport, however, seemed to paralyze some of them and they lost their foot-holds and rolled back down the hill. We did not disturb them further, and I suppose they all got away to tell their tales of hair-breadth escape.

At last my horse was brought over. As I was galloping down the tow-path I overtook Llewellyn, who had gone off afoot in despair of getting his horse at all, and was double-quicking it through the dust and the hot sunshine. "Take me up, and I'll give you half I get," he pleaded. Whether from pity or cupidity, you may judge as you please, I took him up behind me; and we got there "just in

time to be too late." The fighting was over, the stores had been looted, and everything in sight had gone through the process of escheat and forfeiture. I did find a few pounds of candy, which I chucked into my haversack, and Llewellyn picked up a pair of lady's shoes which some overladen ranger had dropped. I did not have the heart to demand of him a division. But what the other fellows got is another story, which I will tell presently.

I have never understood why the taking of the Point of Rocks that day was such an easy job. It was manned by a company of cavalry and a regiment of infantry, and reinforcements were within easy reach. I do not count the cavalry, for they were the notorious Loudoun Rangers—a band of renegade Loudouners, under Capt. Sam Means, for whom we ever bore a regard, ardent but misplaced in the sense that we could never get close enough to them to levy our attachment. This time they ran across the bridge over the canal, to which I have referred, paused long enough to tear up the flooring of it, so as to impede our pursuit, and then fled to parts unknown. But something might have been expected of the infantry. When you recall that our only approach to them was over a narrow tow-path on which we could ride only two abreast, that we were on the farther side of a rock-ribbed canal over which it was impossible for us to charge them, it is inscrutable that they did not get into that railroad tunnel and just shoot us down as fast as we showed ourselves. But the facts are that less than two

hundred and fifty cavalry rode down on them in broad daylight, relaid the flooring on the bridge before their eyes, crossed over it, and ran them as far as eye could reach, without loss or injury to a single man or horse. This sounds like a fairy tale, but it is literally true.

While our men were repairing the bridge, the infantry on the hill kept up a lively firing, but as they did not hit a thing, I presume they were simply burning powder to add to the hilariousness of the occasion. In the mean while, impetuous Harry Hatcher ran across on the sills of the bridge to the deserted "flag of our Union" which he saw drooping disconsolately on its staff as if in very shame for its cowardly defenders, and hauled it down and brought it back into worthier, if less reverential company. And then the boys got across. Some of them made for the camp on the hill, which was deserted when they reached it, and made bonfires there of such things as they could not bring away. A few of them followed Major Richards out the Frederick City road in a fruitless chase after some fugitives who soon disappeared in the mountains. But the most of them stopped in the village, and after cutting the telegraph wires, proceeded to confiscate the contents of the stores and sutlers' shops. When I arrived on the scene, as already stated, this work had been consummated and the boys were hilarious. They had not had such a "glorious Fourth" since they popped fire-crackers with pickaninnies around the negro quarters.

The gang that recrossed the river that evening was a sight to behold. They were laden and garnished with, and otherwise affected by the assorted stocks usual to country stores. Bolts of cloths and calicoes were piled up behind and before them. Some of the latter, of gaudiest prints, served as sashes which streamed out from the shoulders or waists of the wearers; and yards upon yards of red and white bunting floated on the evening breeze. Boots and shoes, for both sexes, hung from the saddles and the horses' necks; and various kinds of tin-ware flashed back the sunlight from every conceivable point of contact with a cavalier. The frequent presence of hoops and ladies' skirts and bonnets showed that the boys had not been unmindful of "the girls they left behind them." Hats for the fair sex, with impromptu trimmings of flashy ribbons, bedecked unkempt heads in fashions that were certainly striking as well as novel. I think that Dame Fashion—even she of Confederate lineage—would have fallen into a fit if she had beheld the liberties taken with her laws. As the command straightened out in the road and moved off toward Leesburg it looked for all the world like a parade of Fantastics. How far the captured groceries, of the wet variety, contributed to the grotesque appearance I feel a delicacy in saying. It might be assumed that my views were tinged with envy, as I sat and munched my poor candy and watched them.

Nor were we without spectators who manifested

all kinds of interest in the passing show. Of course sounds of the carryings on across the river had roused the country-side, and the natives gathered in groups along our line of march. Some of these were content to watch the sight and gossip with the boys, others of a more practical cast of thought developed a disposition to find out what was in it for them, and induced some rangers to open a peripatetic retail business on the road. Money was scarce, but other currency was found. Even that austere historian, Col. John Scott, records one instance of barter in which a mountain maiden secured a pair of shoes for a kiss. Certainly, ribbons and red sashes were noticeably scarcer when we went into bivouac in Mrs. Dawson's woods that night.

Next morning the men were relieved of all their impedimenta, for serious work. During the evening and night our enemies, who had been scattered to the four winds, got together and with strong reinforcements returned to the river at Point of Rocks and Noland's Ferry, a few miles lower down, and threatened to cross at each point. The prospect of losing their spoils for which they had so strained their consciences threw our "non-combatant branch" on to the verge of nervous prostration, and they cordially took charge of the work of impressing wagons and teams from the neighborhood for hauling the captured goods back to a place of safety. They prosecuted it with such energy that a considerable wagon-train soon moved

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out toward the fastnesses of the Fauquier hills. This was quite a novel attachment to Mosby's men, their specialty being to attach themselves to the other fellow's wagon train.

Our sharpshooters again repaired to the river banks and proceeded to interest the enemy at long range. The day was spent in making such demonstration of force as should deter them from coming over. The presence of artillery with us, and so many dismounted men, may have suggested to them that we might be a detachment from Lee's army, and the Colonel had us execute some maneuvers which strongly fostered that illusion. Our visible numbers were multiplied by a shrewd stratagem through which the Yankees were made to see more than double. The road rises out of a deep hollow at the foot of Dr. Mason's meadow and passes up a high hill in full view of the Point of Rocks and a short mile south of the river. It then turns at right angles on the hill top and goes out of sight into the upper end of the same hollow. That the dust in it was fetlock deep goes without saying.

The command was marched over this hill, raising a cloud of dust through which it was dimly visible to the spectators across the river. As soon as the head of the column got out of their sight it would gallop down the hollow, through Dr. Mason's meadow and, falling in behind the rear, would march over the hill again. It was a kind of endless chain business by which regiment after regiment was paraded across the stage; and the amount of

Confederate cavalry which was exhibited that day for the edification of those Yankees was limited only by the demands of the occasion. Of course our commander had to refrain from overdoing the thing, and see to it that the program was duly varied, lest the fake should be discovered. At any rate we did riding enough to keep the enemy on their own side of the river, and to make us sleep soundly that night in somebody's woods near Waterford. And the lights of the bivouac went out, and the curtain fell on the Point of Rocks raid.

CHAPTER VII

THE MOUNT ZION FIGHT

While the command slept in the woods, and perhaps dreamed the Point of Rocks raid into the misty past, the pickets on the neighboring hills guarded their slumbers, the scouts scoured the adjacent country for information which should determine our movements on the morrow, and Major Hibbs's famous Corn Detail secured the sinews of war. Though the men might go without rations, and perhaps fought all the more savagely when hungry, the horses had to be kept in prime condition, and, whatever happened, feed should be provided for them. We had no wagons to attend us, and the necessities of the case evolved "Major" Hibbs.

When a halt was made for the night he would summons his corps of favorites, consisting of "Ned Rector and several others," and set out in quest of corn. Sometimes they would be gone half the night, but his unerring instinct never failed to find a Union man's barn, and sooner or later he came in with bags of corn piled up behind and before the saddles. Nor was this as unpopular a service as it might appear, for it generally involved good feeding for the detail as well as for the horses, and not

infrequently a distillery was included in the itinerary.

Pray don't make the mistake of assigning William Hibbs among the "non-combatants." Though his title was merely in courtesy to his quasi office of quartermaster, no braver man followed Mosby. Many years past military age, he rode side by side with his own sons, in the foremost ranks, and his poor maimed and scarred body attested his familiarity with hot battles. Childless and homeless, this loyal fellow finally died in the county almshouse. His fate sharply accentuates the difference in the results of the war to the Blue and the Gray. The former have the government, the offices, the pensions. Achilles won the victor's palm, because the gods made him invulnerable; but glory shines on Hector's grave!

Early the next morning our scouts, who had been in Leesburg, four or five miles away, brought important news. They reported that Major Forbes with his crack California battalion, had come up from Fairfax the evening before and was in that neighborhood, looking for us; but I reckon he was looking with the same ardor with which the boy sought work—praying that he might not find it. Our presence in the immediate vicinity must have been known to the Union sympathizers there, of whom there were many, for some of our men had gone to that attractive burgh the night after the attack on Point of Rocks, to lay their trophies at the feet of their lady-loves. Indeed, the firing on

the river, which had been kept up with more or less regularity throughout the subsequent day, proclaimed that things were going on in which the gallant Major might participate if he had a hankering for a fight. It is incredible that he did not know that we were only a few miles away, giving our undivided attention to his friends in our front, and that his opportunity was to come on us in the rear, and get us between the upper and nether millstones. But possibly he had some apprehensions of the experience of the fellow who caught the sleeping panther by the tail and had to call for "help to let the blamed thing go"—and his friends might not have crossed the river in time to meet the necessities of his case.

Upon receiving the report of the scouts Colonel Mosby ordered us up and we started out to carry Major Forbes's opportunity to him. But that gentleman seemed still inclined to elude glory; for when we came in sight of Leesburg we saw the Federals moving out in the direction of Aldie. There were about two hundred and fifty of them, finely mounted and equipped, and they had the reputation of being good fighters and well disciplined. Our own numbers had been reduced to less than two hundred by the departure of some of the men for their homes and we knew that in hunting a fight with these men we were not going on a picnic.

But when we reached Leesburg we heard such high boasts of how anxious they were to meet us, and what they would do for us if they could come

up with us, that we were fired with ambition to overtake them. It was no light circumstance, either, that these taunts were communicated to us by the pretty girls of Leesburg, who lined the streets as we passed through the town and presented to us trays laden with most acceptable breakfasts. That was my first visit to the ancient town, and possibly the pleasant impression of its citizens I received that morning was somewhat responsible for the fact that I made it my home after the war and have lived there ever since. The immediate results were that the bright eyes and the breakfasts and the boasts put us in the best possible fighting trim, and we went after those Californians with the determination to wipe them off the face of the earth.

Colonel Mosby, however, was a wily as well as a daring fighter, and never let his valor get the better of his discretion—at least, not in the handling of his men. He always sought to secure for them every possible advantage for a fight, and his almost unvarying success in this was one of the marks of his genius. The loss of one of his trained partisans was a much more serious matter to him than the loss of many Federals was to their side and he could not afford to play a swapping game.

Somehow he learned that the Yankees were striking for Mount Zion, an old church on the Little River turnpike about two miles east of Aldie and some ten miles south of Leesburg. He assumed that they would take the most direct road there, the road which crosses Goose Creek at Ball's Mill, about

six miles south of where we were. The natural advantages there for a surprise party are exceptional, so making a hurried detour we arrived there first and got into position to receive our expected visitors. Our mounted men were formed for a charge, behind the bluff around which the road winds after crossing the creek, and sharpshooters were hidden among the bushes along its crest, facing the enemy as they should cross the broad creek bottoms and enter the ford. I presume that it was intended for the carbineers to open on them as they crossed the creek, and while they were thereby disconcerted the cavalry would charge them. But whatever the plan was it miscarried, and after we had waited there some time, it was ascertained that the enemy had gone to Mount Zion by another route. We hurriedly moved away from there by an obscure road which came out on the pike about two miles south of Mount Zion.

Colonel Mosby was himself scouting vigorously; and when he came to us, marching cross country, we saw that he had changed horses and was mounted on his favorite sorrel mare. Whenever he appeared mounted on her, we knew there was business on hand, and I recollect the comments which went along the line when we learned that he had sent a special messenger after her for this occasion. He had located the Federals in an old field just south of the pike, in which they had halted to feed. To the west of them was a large brick dwelling and grounds. East of them, leaving the field and

crossing the turnpike, was a body of woods about a hundred yards wide. The woods hid the Yankees from our view when we came out on the pike on top of a hill nearly a mile below them. Their pickets in the woods doubtless discovered us at once. So, this was not to be a case of surprise, but a straight charge over an open road upon an enemy who was fully prepared for us. The only advantage of position was that we were between them and their home. This was a problematical one, because it was calculated to make them fight all the more desperately.

About a dozen carbineers, under Lieutenant Hatcher, went toward them in a sweeping gallop, while our artillery was being placed in position on the hill and the mounted men formed for the charge. The enemy's pickets in the woods fired some ineffectual shots at the sharpshooters, but we did not get within a hundred yards before they broke and ran back upon the main body. When we galloped into the woods which they had vacated, and scattered along the edge next to them, I saw a grand sight. A couple of hundred yards in front of us, upon the slope of the hill in the old field, the Californians were drawn up in two lines, one behind the other, facing us. Their alignment was as perfect as if on dress parade. Their officers were in position with their sabers drawn and the men sat on their horses with carbines ready. The shots which we fired at them from the woods seemed to me to be returned with absolute regularity at intervals along

their line and threw bullets close enough to us to make it very interesting. Then our cavalry came whooping up the pike. Just before they came up to us, the old howitzer boomed and sent a shell over their heads. I thought I could see the blue lines on the hill waver a little, but that was all. As the head of our column swept past us up the pike some of our sharpshooters dismounted and tore a gap in the fence at the corner of the field, and Lieutenant Wrenn, with a section of Company B, dashed through it and up the hill. I think this attack struck the Yankees while they were moving to adjust themselves to the charge which our first column was making upon what had been their left flank. Just then a fellow on a white horse was seen to break away from the column next to us and start across the field toward the south. By that time some of our boys on the fleetest horses had gotten up to them both in their front and on their flank. The volleys which had been intended for us as we should come up toward them in solid column, had been too long delayed; and as their saddles were being fast emptied by the deadly revolvers in the hands of the boys who knew no tactics, both columns, which had now become mixed up in one mass of blue, wavered and broke and followed the man on the white horse.

By the time I had remounted and come up, the fighting there was all over, and blue and gray together were sweeping across the fields toward Little River Church, where the road from Aldie passes to Sudley. At one of the cross fences which

obstructed their flight Major Forbes made a desperate attempt to rally his men, but it was hopeless and brief, and as soon as the obstruction could be broken through the race began again. I was mortified to realize that this, too, was over before I got into it. The truth is that my horse was unaccountably dull, and in spite of the most vigorous spurring, I fell into the wake of the pursuit.

It was during this last rally that Major Forbes had a personal hand-to-hand set-to with Capt. Tom Richards and wounded him sorely, but had to succumb to the Captain's staying powers and finally surrendered to him. All the way across the fields the fighting and capturing had been kept up, so that when the Sudley road was reached most of the enemy had been shot or captured. There were very few of them who road out on that highway that afternoon. When I reached Corner Hall, about two miles south of the church, I met the last of our men coming back, who informed me that not more than five or six of the Yankees had gotten away, and that Colonel Mosby and Johnnie Edmunds were after them. They, too, soon returned with the report that the fugitives had cleanly outridden them.

Notwithstanding that Major Forbes did not get a chance to deliver one of his deadly scientific volleys into our ranks, our victory was by no means a bloodless one. Eight of our men were wounded; four of whom, Henry Smallwood, Hugh Waters, Tom Lake and Frank Woolf, were lads of my own

set, and my particular chums. Henry's death, which soon followed, was a great sorrow to me. He was a quiet, unostentatious little fellow, and absolutely reliable. The others recovered, and survived the war—through a special Providence.

Night fell before we gathered ourselves together. The mansion house, of which I have spoken, was turned into a hospital, and the occupants, the family of Mr. Samuel Skinner, were indefatigable in their ministrations to the wounded. It was necessary for us to remain there for some hours, and I was placed on picket. I was posted in the road below the house and on the edge of the battlefield. I have watched for the boys under many trying circumstances, for I think I never went on a raid that I did not have to serve on picket, but I never had as bad two hours as I had that night. The groans of the wounded men and horses, the pitiful calls for relief, the prayers, the heart-rending laments for loved ones were borne to me on the quiet summer night from the most distant parts of the battlefield, it seemed to me. To hear a poor fellow, within a few rods perhaps, calling for water, or for some one to move his dead horse off his broken leg, or to raise his head and let him die in peace, and yet not dare to leave my post and go to him, was an awful trial to a boy of warm sympathies. As I sat on my horse that night and listened to these sounds and thought of my young friends perhaps dying, up at the house, I realized what a modern soldier

has so aptly formulated into the words, "War is hell!"

There was another incident of this fight which may seem trivial, but it was full of pathos to me. We finally halted for the night in a grass field some miles up the road, near Middleburg. Our horses were stripped and turned loose to graze on the luxuriant clover, and we sank on the soft sward, with our saddles for pillows. When I awoke in the early morning light I saw my horse standing at my feet with his head bending over me. His breast and forelegs were covered with clotted blood which had flowed from an ugly bullet wound. How long he had stood there in mute appeal for sympathy and relief, I do not know—perhaps all the night. But as I recalled how cruelly I had spurred him to the chase the evening before, how without a groan of protest he had responded the best he could, and how patiently he had stood with me, all unconscious of his suffering, on that lonely, miserable watch, I was not ashamed to throw my arms around his neck and weep out my grief and contrition. Poor Joe, that was our last ride to battle together!

CHAPTER VIII

THE ADAMSTOWN RAID

On the day General Early crossed the Potomac at Harper's Ferry in his memorable movement on Washington, Colonel Mosby sent a detachment of his command under Lieut. Joe Nelson over into Maryland to a point on the telegraph line, with instructions to cut communication and prevent or delay intelligence of Early's advance.

As we approached the Potomac through a defile scarce lighted by the early morning sun, I was aroused by a gruff voice calling, "Halloa, Old Stick-in-the-Mud!" I looked up and heard the ringing laugh of John Mobley, as he forged on toward the head of the column. He belonged to White's battalion, but for some months had been on detached service scouting about northern Loudoun and the adjacent country in Maryland. He was not more than twenty years old, but he was wonderfully shrewd and daring, and had made quite a reputation as a skilful scout and reckless fighter. His presence with us in the capacity of guide, and the heading of our line of march toward the river, assured us that we were about to "carry the war into Africa" again, and we braced ourselves for adventure.

By the way, I never saw the young scout after that day. Some of his performances aroused the

bitter animosities of the Union citizens of that section, and soon after this two or three of them treacherously lured him into an ambuscade which they had arranged, and had him shot to death by a file of Federal infantry.

When we neared the river a call was made for carbineers to come to the front. I usually carried a carbine, notwithstanding the inconvenience, because I liked sharpshooting service. It may have been for the reason that it brought me some experiences which would not come to me otherwise, or it may have been that I preferred to do my fighting at long range. But my ardor for sharpshooting on the river, at least, had been decidedly modified in the Point of Rocks raid; so this morning when Cab Maddux asked to borrow my gun to go to the front, I had the discretion to humor his valor.

We found a small Yankee picket at Chick's Ford, where our detachment crossed; but they speedily gave us right of way, and I do not remember that our sharpshooters got a wetting.

I recall with distinctness the impression made upon me by the condition of the country along our line of march to Adamstown. Everything betokened peace and plenty. The crops were abundant, the stock fat and sleek, and the houses seemed the quiet abodes of thrift. How different from those which we had left in Fauquier and southern Loudoun! Indeed, the only signs of war were, now and then, some citizens hurrying away to the woods with a drove of fine horses. They evidently had an

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Sergeant, Company D.

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intuition of our affinity for such stock; though it was seldom quick enough to save them. Our boys usually succeeded in overhauling them and bringing back such horses as were fit for our service, and indeed many that were not.

We reached Adamstown early in the forenoon and found the store open, the shops running and the citizens enjoying an Arcadia of peace. Our sudden and totally unexpected incursion gave them their first taste of war; and if it was not altogether agreeable, you may be sure that we made it sufficiently pungent to them.

Our first care was to cut down a telegraph pole and snap the wire. After which we proceeded to provide for our families, and appropriated to our own use, with liberal hand and joyous hearts, "sundry goods, wares and merchandises," with which we found the shelves of the only store well laden. But in the very midst of our proceedings of "escheat and confiscation" we were ordered by Lieutenant Nelson to restore our prizes to their former owner. It seems that the storekeeper had taken that officer aside and convinced him by some arguments (of the *solidity* of which we have always been a little skeptical), that in spite of his surroundings he was an original, unadulterated secessionist and entitled to our protection and admiration. I cannot do justice to the feelings of disappointment and disgust with which we relinquished our booty. Much of it, however, was of such a character that it could not be restored, and many of the boys moved

away with their heads as light as their hands, if their hearts were heavier.

From Adamstown we moved eastward and, skirting the Sugar Loaf Mountain, struck back for the river. Alongside this road we came to a country store over which the owner did not succeed in raising the "secesh flag" in time to save himself. His stock consisted for the most part of "wet goods," which were clearly contraband of war; and the work of confiscation proceeded promptly and without interruption. Not altogether without interruption, either—for in the midst of our "taking stock" word came to us that the Yankees were after us in force and were also pressing toward the river to shut us off.

This started us away, and though our march from there to the river was not very orderly or dignified, it was by no means the retreat of a stampeded or demoralized body. The fact is the boys had been "confiscating" so freely at the country store that they had become more or less reckless. I never saw a time when Company A would not fight anything that got in front of it; but that evening I don't think the men cared much what got in front of them. They had no fancy for being surrounded and cut off in the enemy's country, but there was a hope pervading them that they would at least be overtaken at the river.

Indeed, so strong was the disposition to fight that some of them could not reserve it for the Yankees. For instance, Lieutenant Nelson and a

private named Moon got into an altercation in which pistols were drawn and only the interference of friends prevented serious trouble. Again, as we were passing down the road to Monocacy, our old friend Bill Ellzey (peace to his ashes!) and a man named Toller came to such a high misunderstanding that, though our pursuers were then in sight, and in spite of all remonstrances, they deliberately got down in the road and hitched their horses and went at it fist and skull. We had to move on and leave them to fight it out; but their friends, the enemy, soon came up and separated them and sent them both off to Fort Delaware to cool off.

When we reached the river at the mouth of the Monocacy late in the afternoon, sure enough, some of the Yankees had anticipated us; and as we rode down on the tow-path a picket, which occupied a bluff a few hundred yards below us, opened fire on us at long range. The command was halted on the river road; and I recollect that near where I stopped there was a large pile of cord wood, sufficiently high to protect myself and horse, and I took advantage of the situation. Just then Lieutenant Nelson spurred his horse out from the column and galloped toward the Yankees, who were up on an almost perpendicular bluff and utterly inaccessible to him. I don't recollect that he called on any one to follow him. Indeed, I considered that he was only doing it for the moral (?) effect. But as the Yankees directed their fire at him and the bullets were knocking the dust up around him, I pulled my horse from

behind the woodpile and started after him. At that moment, however, I received a very forcible intimation from a crack marksman on the hill that I was not wanted at the front. I felt a sharp tap on the side of my head, and the next thing I knew I was lying behind the wood pile again, with a handkerchief tied around my head.

In the mean while, Harry Hatcher and Major Hibbs, "with Ned Rector and several others," had gotten around in the rear of the pickets and, charging upon them unexpectedly, had killed or captured the whole party.

We then pushed on up the river to reach the ford at Noland's Ferry before another detachment of Yankees, who were coming down the river, should get there. We barely made it, too. I crossed over with the prisoners among the first. But the enemy came up in time to make it hot for our rear-guard. Cab Maddux, even in those days, made a rather attractive mark, but as the bullets were splashing the water around him, his characteristic solicitude for others was manifested. Seeing a comrade in arms struggling through the waves some distance off and not receiving that attention from the Federal soldiers which he thought due to his rank, Cab cried out at the top of his voice, "Hurry up, *Major* Hibbs! Come along, *Major!*"

The Yankees at once transferred their shower baths from Cab to the Major, who showed his appreciation of the former's self-sacrifice by splut-

tering out to him that he was "—— *respectful* all at once."

Graft Carlisle had been assigned to take charge of the prisoners. He escorted them to the water and then, himself, returned to where the fire was hottest, which place, of course, was close to Lieutenant Nelson's side. As that officer caught sight of him he inquired with anxiety,

"Graft, where are your prisoners?"

"Gone over the river."

"Why are you not with them? I put you in charge of them."

"Why, I ordered another fellow to take my place."

"You can't do that!" yelled Nelson.

"Can't I?" answered Graft. "Well, I did do it."

And there the matter ended.

As Dr. Sowers was dressing my wound at a farmhouse on this side the river, Harry Hatcher came up and offered this consolation, "Never mind, Johnnie, old boy; I killed one of them Yankees for that."

CHAPTER IX

THE GREENBACK RAID

I did not know for many years that the Greenback raid was, in one sense, the sequel to the Whitewood fight. This was a sharp little scrap which we had with the Eighth Illinois Cavalry one afternoon near the Plains.

This regiment was engaged in supervising the relaying of the tracks of the Manassas Gap Railroad. Or, more precisely, together with a considerable body of infantry, it was acting as guard for the workmen who were undertaking that job, to protect them and their work from interruptions on our part. Colonel Mosby determined to make them earn their wages, so to speak, and proceeded to interest them. Among many other entertainments provided for them, such as holding up their trains, tearing up their tracks and surprising their camp, he arranged this matinee.

He took about eighty of us out to their vicinity and casually exposed some decoys. The Federals caught sight of them and sent out their feelers. The vigilant eyes of these discovered others of us evidently trying to keep out of their sight. Then the regiment quickly mounted and came out. Of course, we hurried away when discovered, and their ardor increased. When we finally fled precipitately

into the big body of timber known as Whitewood they were so close on our heels that they could not forbear from rushing on to bag their game. When they got well into the woods the fugitives suddenly regained their nerve and wheeled squarely about in the faces of their pursuers, while others of our men pressed on each of their flanks. This was a "number" on the program for which they had not arranged; and such of them as found it practicable to do so sought the protection of their humbler allies, the infantry, with a haste at least equal to the presumption with which they had left it.

But at one time things seemed pretty uncertain with us. The Eighth Illinois were no holiday soldiers, but by considerable odds the best fighters we ever tackled. Notwithstanding the surprise, they held us up for a space; and in the hand-to-hand fight Colonel Mosby, who was himself in our front rank and in the thickest of the melée, was thrown to the ground, his horse falling upon one of his legs. I am not sure but that the desperate rally of his men around him until he could remount really turned the balances. For, of course, we just had to stay by him, regardless of all consequences.

He told me in San Francisco in 1895 that he had been contemplating an attack on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad trains in the Shenandoah Valley; he said that just about this time his scouts reported that the opportunities were favorable for making a successful one, and he determined to reward the boys who were in the Whitewood fight by putting them

up against a train which would likely be laden with more valuable stores than were those they had been capturing on the Manassas branch. Accordingly, in a few days, after his injured limb braced up a little and he found that we could suspend operations at the Plains, we went over to the Valley.

We spent the greater part of the day in some high-rolling sport on the turnpike between Winchester and Martinsburg. The command was hidden in a piece of woods conveniently situated. From the elevations our scouts watched parties of Federals moving along the pike in squads of different sizes and on various missions. When one such came in sight a party from our camp would slip off around the hills to appear in their front; and when they ran back from them they would meet another of our parties which had been sent out in another direction to intercept them. With variations, this thing was kept up pretty much all day, most of the experiences being confined to the realm of comedy and marked by nothing more serious than lively horse-racing and the incidents usual to running fellows down and gathering them in. There were, however, some tragedies. The party with which I was sent out struck a squad which not only showed fight, but which, when they found themselves hemmed up in the road, undertook a desperate race across country. One poor fellow foolishly made it necessary for us to shoot him. He must have lost his head, for there was no reason why he should not have surrendered. There was reason

why two of his companions should have taken hopeless chances; for when overtaken they were found to be Jesse scouts, clad in Confederate uniforms. When I came back to the pike the wounded soldier lying there was still alive. I went to him to learn the extent of his hurt and to render assistance. He lay on his back, shot through the body, and insisted that he was dying. I did not think so, as there was not much bleeding, and tried to cheer him; but he talked of his home and his mother, and as he talked he suddenly rolled over, jerked his leg a time or two, and was gone. Of all the "passings" to which I was a party during the war, this is the only one that has really "left a haunt in my head." He was but a lad and had brought his death on himself so fatuously.

One of the Jesse scouts met his fate over in the field, the other was overtaken by a man who did not have the heart to kill him, as he ought to have done, for I am sure it must be much easier to die in hot blood. But he was carried back to camp and later in the day turned over to Ewell Attwell for execution. Ewell had a record for killing men in fight, but he told me that he just did not have the nerve to take that fellow out under the stars and all alone by themselves stand him up and shoot the life out of him. So he told him to turn his back and run for it and he would give him five steps start. How much that was worth to him in front of Attwell's revolver, God knows. Attwell swore to me that he himself did not know.

Late in the evening we moved away, and I recollect that the march that night was unusually brisk. We pulled up in a body of woods where we dismounted and left our horses with a detail, then marched a few hundred yards across a field and reached the railroad at a deep cut. Here we went to work on the track, and soon had one side of it so elevated on fence rails and old ties as to insure the upsetting of the engine when it should come to that point. Then we laid along the bank and waited for things to happen.

Some of the boys, perhaps most of them, soon fell asleep, but "tired Nature's sweet restorer" was not for me that night. The lights and sounds from a neighboring camp first interested me, and then my imagination ran riot. Anticipations of what was certain to happen, and pictures of what might happen, in the next half hour, set my nerves tingling. It is not a pleasant thing to lie calmly under the stars and contemplate the usual contingencies of a straight fight. But the possible horrors of a railroad wreck, and the sufferings of women, children, and, not improbably, the presence of a carload of infantry, took such tangible shapes in my meditations as to give me a very bad half hour.

Presently I heard the train coming and I hurried around waking up the boys. I then went back to my place and watched and listened to the thumping of my heart. Nearer and louder came the sounds and quicker beat my pulses. Directly the headlight of the engine shot around a curve not far off,

and as the engine rushed almost under me, it seemed, my heart well-nigh choked me. And then there was a tremendous thump and the shriek of the steam and the sound of a single shot and then—"the deluge." "Board her, boys!" rang out the Colonel's crisp, steady tones. That brought me back to sense and braced me. The conductor of the train seemed to take in the situation more promptly than any of us, and never for a moment lost his nerve. He jumped off between his train and us, swinging a lighted lantern, and cried out that he surrendered the train. Down the bank we rushed.

As I ran up the steps on the platform of a coach a tall Ranger was standing with his pistol poked through the door ajar, calling on somebody to surrender. Being short and slim, I slipped under his arm and jumped in. On the first seat sat a soldier with a lady beside him, who, as I stopped, assured me that her "husband was a sick man." Just behind them sat a gentleman, across whose portliness stretched a gold watch chain. He must have noticed that it fascinated my gaze, for he promptly presented it to me, without detaching from it a beautiful gold watch. Of course I could not accept such munificence without some inquiry into the condition of his finances. The generous old man responded to this with the offer of his pocket-book, but I had barely noticed its plump appearance, when a long lank arm reached over my shoulder and appropriated what my modesty might have declined. By this time the boys were crowding into the car. As I moved

down the aisle I felt a gentle touch on my arm and a sweet voice asked if I would "protect them." Of course I would, and took my seat between as pretty a pair of cherubs as ever made a fool of a soldier boy. And I stayed there, too, until the looting of the car was completed.

After the looting the cars were to be burnt, but they had to be emptied of certain valuables. First, of course, came the ladies, who were disposed as comfortably as practicable with their baggage which was gathered from the car. You may be sure that my fair proteges received every needed attention, not only from myself but from other gallants whom their beauty attracted. I believe they were the belles of the occasion; and I am sure that they really enjoyed the affair, and doubtless had many stories to relate of their flirtations that night with Mosby's "Guerrillas."

The occupants of one car were immigrants who could not understand even enough English to learn how to get out of a fire. They sat immovable under every inducement to "change base." Finally, when the situation was reported to the Colonel, his eye fell on a big bundle of newspapers which had been intercepted, and he ordered that they be set afire and thrown into the car. This gave rise to the only comical feature of the occasion. When the fire brands fell into the aisle, the dumb creatures didn't stand on the order of their going, but went tumbling heels over head out of the windows.

We ourselves barely escaped a stampede. Cab

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Company D

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Maddux had been left with the horse detail back in the woods. Now Cab was nothing if not enterprising, and as he saw the lights and heard the sounds, he just couldn't stand it. So here he came, rushing across the field. When he came up, it was with some cock and bull story about the Yankees coming. Nothing can be more demoralizing to a cavalryman than to be attacked away from his horse, and for a moment or two the situation was more than threatening. The Colonel, however, promptly got control of affairs, and when he satisfied himself that it was a false alarm, maybe Cab didn't get a roasting. It wound up with a threat of that direst of all punishments to a Mosby man—to be sent back to the regular service.

But why was it called the Greenback Raid? Well, I'll declare, I well-nigh left Hamlet out of the play. Before the cars were set afire such things as appeared valuable were taken out. As an officer whom West Aldridge had ordered out stepped upon the ground, bearing an innocent looking satchel, Charley Dear courteously relieved him of his baggage. As he parted with it, he charged Charley to be careful with it, as it contained greenbacks. "Greenbacks, greenbacks!" shouted Charley as he made his way toward the Colonel. An investigation revealed a great roll of uncut sheets of the "long green," and Charley's eyes were not the only ones that assumed the dimensions of saucers at the ravishing sight.

About this time West Aldridge came up with a similar fairy-tale, and substantial exhibits to bring

it into the realm of fact. In his final clean-up of a car he noticed a large dark object on the floor between two seats, covered with a handsome gum blanket. There was no response to the investigating kick that he gave it, but the lifting of the blanket revealed a Yankee officer, crouching and clinging to a forlorn hope that he might be overlooked. So tenaciously did he embrace it that West's call on him to come along was unheeded until it was emphasized by the click of his revolver in his ear; and then as Major Ruggles rose to his feet and yielded to his fate, he managed to drop his poncho into the place where he had hidden. He moved off with great reluctance, as one who had left his heart behind him. These peculiarities of behavior recurred to West's mind after he had turned over his prisoner at the car door, and impelled him to return and get that precious poncho. I think he must have been afraid of snakes, for he investigated it again with his foot before picking it up, and found it to be a heavy tin box. As he bore it away it suggested treasure to his excited imagination. The first thing was his horse, and then he sought Colonel Mosby.

"What have you got?" a voice inquired as he was making his way around the crowd.

"Gold; a safe of gold!" he gasped, and his eyes glittered wildly in the star light.

"Come here, boy," and the voice was low and stern and metallic. "You don't have to find Mosby, or tell anybody about this. Let's you and I strike

for Loudoun with the stuff." That suggestion brought West to his equipoise. I would not have liked to be the object of the contempt that flashed from his eyes, nor to be the one to whom he hissed back, "And be a thief?" The man to whom he said it was one of the desperadoes of the command, but he only answered, "Well, you are a damned fool!" and stood out of his way as he went on toward Colonel Mosby.

Before this find was published and while the fire and smoke from the burning train were going up toward the abode of the Recording Angel (and I wonder how he wrote up that night's transaction), Major Ruggles remarked in taunting tones, as he stood on the bank among the boys, that he had contributed upward of two hundred thousand dollars to that fire. "Look here, Major," West replied, and he pulled back the gum and tapped the box with a caressing hand. The Major's countenance fell.

When the contents of the tin box and the satchel were added together they amounted to the handsome sum of over one hundred and sixty thousand dollars. I had as well add here that the next day at Bloomfield they were impartially divided out among the boys who were on that raid, so that each one received about $2,200 in crisp new greenbacks, in uncut sheets of various denominations. My old haversack never bore such contents before; and to tell the truth, my eyes have never fallen upon such a sight since. Some of our prisoners informed us that

even a larger amount of money than this, belonging to another paymaster, was missed by us and consumed with the burnt train. Possibly this was true and probably it was said to make us feel bad.

The only man who did not participate in this division was Colonel Mosby himself. No sort of solicitations from his men could induce him to take a share. His emphatic response was that he was fighting for glory, not for spoils. I have always wondered what he took us for? But so sensitive on this point was he, that he would not even permit Mrs. Mosby to accept a purse of gold which the boys subsequently made up and tendered her.

After the train had gotten well afire, we gathered up ourselves and the things which we had saved from the wreck, and took our departure; some of us not without regard for the "girls we left behind us."

When about daybreak we reached the neighborhood of Kabletown we learned that Captain Blazer with his band of picked scouts were encamped in a piece of woods not far from the line of our retreat. We had it in for him, because of his recent treatment of Company A, and thought to return his compliment in an early morning call, and induce him to go home with us. Before the sun rose we dashed into his camp; but it was only to find empty beds and the fires still burning by which his men had commenced cooking their breakfasts. The wily old chap had caught wind of us on the breezes that attend the spring of the day and had given us the go-by.

Among the prisoners whom we brought from the train was a fine looking lieutenant. He was a German and a professional soldier who had seen service in one of the Continental armies. In an interview with Colonel Mosby he took pains to impress upon him that he had no sentiment whatever in our war, but had joined the Federal service only for the sake of experience and to perfect himself in American military tactics.

While he was reposing under the shade of a tree near Bloomfield the next morning, a Ranger stood before him and expressed admiration of his handsome cavalry boots, and ended with demanding a trade. This was duly effected. In a few minutes another came up and went through a similar proceeding with reference to his hat. When the third man, in a decided condition of negligee as to breeches, opened negotiations for his bran-new trousers, the Lieutenant thought the limit had been reached and demanded to see Colonel Mosby before undressing. He was promptly carried to that officer, and indignantly stated his grievance with some pretty strong remarks about the customs of civilized warfare being abused.

"Did you not tell me that you came over here to learn American tactics?" drawled the Colonel.

"Yes, yes," he stammered; "but who ever heard of such treatment of prisoners?"

"Well, those are our tactics," said the Colonel, and the incident was closed.

I always thought that the Colonel arranged this lesson for the foreign gentleman who was seeking experience.

CHAPTER X

THE BLAZER FIGHT

While Colonel Mosby was occupying as much of the attention of Sheridan as he could and absorbing that of General Augur, in the fall of 1864, there was another Federal officer engaged in attracting the attention of Colonel Mosby and all his men—indeed, he had a special contract not only to interest the Colonel, but to take him and all his belongings, dead or alive, and that officer was Capt. Richard Blazer. This brave man was a West Virginian, who had gone into the Northern army, and had so distinguished himself that he was specially chosen for the task of driving away or destroying Mosby and his command. However rough he was on the members of the Forty-third Battalion of Virginia Cavalry, "his kindness," says Mr. John Scott, "to citizens was proverbial, and everywhere within the range of his activities the citizens were ready to bear honorable testimony to his character."

How effective was his work let his own report show; but, with all allowance for self-praise, he was certainly a thorn in Mosby's side.

"Headquarters Independent Scouts,

"Middletown, Va., Oct. 24, 1864.

"Sir: I have the honor of submitting the following report of the operations of my command since the 18th of August:

"On the 18th, learning that a party of Mosby's guerrillas were in the vicinity of Myerstown, I proceeded to that place and overtook them near the Shenandoah River, and, after a chase of three miles, I drove them across the river, capturing one prisoner. The army having fallen back to Halltown on the 25th, according to your orders, I went into Loudoun County, and after operating for several days I killed five of Mosby's gang and captured three prisoners. The army having again advanced to Berryville, on the night of the 3d of September I learned that Mosby, with a considerable force, was at Snickersville. Early on the morning of the 4th I crossed the river at Backus' Ford and moved up the river to where I could get up the mountain through the woods. I struck the pike east of the top of the mountain, and moved on their camp. Finding that he had left during the night in the direction of Charlestown, I determined to follow. I recrossed the mountain through Lewis Gap, and, by a forced march, I overtook them about 2 P. M. at Myers' Ford, and, after a spirited fight for several minutes, I completely routed them, with a loss on his part of thirteen killed, six wounded, five prisoners and seventeen horses. My loss was one

killed and six wounded. Since that I have had several small affairs with them, in which I have always defeated them, except twice. On the 20th Lieutenant Ewing, with five men, was attacked on the Berryville pike, near the Opequon, by a superior force, and all captured except himself. On the 23d Sergeant Fuller, of the Fifth Virginia Infantry, with ten men, was attacked near Summit Point by fifty or sixty guerrillas. He fought them until he was overpowered and four of his men were killed, one wounded and the rest all captured but three, who made their escape.

"Having learned that a man by the name of Marshall was recruiting a company in the vicinity of Ashby's Gap, and that they were to organize on the 25th, I proceeded to their reported rendezvous, near White Post, and completely surprised them, getting Marshall and four of his men, and capturing all his papers. In another affair below Front Royal I left eight of his murderers to keep company with some that (were) left by General Custer; these, with a number of others that I have picked up through the country, make an aggregate, in killed, forty-four; wounded, twelve, and prisoners, including two captured in the advance to Cedar Creek the first time, twelve.

"My entire loss is five men killed, seven wounded and eight prisoners.

"I am, sir, very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"(Signed) R. Blazer,

"Captain Commanding Independent Scouts.

"Assistant Adjutant-General, Army of West Virginia."

After this report was filed, indeed, shortly prior to the occurrence of which I am about to give an account, Captain Blazer had come upon Company A of Mosby's battalion while bivouacked in a glen of the Blue Ridge, and completely surprised and routed them, killing some of their best men, capturing more and shooting down and capturing their commanding officer, Lieutenant Nelson, who to this day carries in his hip the leaden souvenir of the occasion.

Company A was now burning for its revenge. Things had come to such a pass that that section of the country was not large enough to hold the rival clans, and it became a military necessity that Blazer should be wiped out. So Colonel Mosby dispatched Major A. E. Richards, with his squadron, consisting of Companies A and B, upon the mission.

We crossed the mountain and the Shenandoah River one afternoon in a terrible rain, and spent the night, without fires or shelter, in Castleman's

big woods, a few miles northeast of Berryville. Early the next morning we moved out in quest of our game. But the vigilant Blazer had due notice of our approach, and, as we afterward learned, pretty accurate information as to our numbers. He broke camp, mounted his men and promptly took up the gage of battle. The parties were about equally matched as to numbers. Each recognized that the decisive hour had come, and was none the less eager for the fray. But each also appreciated the immense advantage of "getting the bulge," as our Harry Hatcher called it, on the other. And now began maneuvering for position. We actually followed each other around in a circle, the commands being kept in the ravines and under the river bluffs, while the hostile scouts frequently caught sight of each other from neighboring hills.

While this game of hide and seek was going on, two of our scouts—Charley McDonough and John Puryear, rode up a hill and found themselves within a short distance of several other soldiers in Confederate uniforms approaching them. They took for granted that they were some of our scouts, though they did not recognize the individuals. McDonough, however, was outlawed by the Federal authorities, with a price upon his head, for some desperate deeds previously committed by him, and this made him cautious of making new acquaintances. Declaring that he wouldn't allow men whom he didn't know to ride up on him, he quietly withdrew, while Puryear, with some impatient expression at Charley's

timidity, awaited the strangers, who, when they came up, proved sure enough to be Jesse scouts, a class of Federal scouts wearing Confederate uniforms, in which disguise they succeeded in "taking in" many an unwary Johnnie Reb.

Puryear was a brave youth, who bore a heart always ready for a soldier's fate, and he bowed to the inevitable with the best grace he could. But an experience awaited him of which he, poor fellow, little dreamed. When he was carried by his captors back to Lieutenant Cole, the second in command to Blazer, who had charge of the scouts, that officer of course questioned him as to the whereabouts of our command, and equally, of course, he refused to give any information. Lieutenant Cole should not have expected it from him. But I suppose he was a man who looked upon war as a barbarous business, anyhow, and considered barbarous means justifiable for military success. At any rate, he insisted upon Puryear's betraying his comrades, and threats of instant death failing to move the loyal-hearted lad, he proceeded apparently to put his threats into execution. A rope was placed around the prisoner's neck and he was suspended from a tree until nearly unconscious, and then lowered and again questioned. Once, even twice, was this repeated. But the boy still refused to answer, and the brutal torture was stayed. Possibly the exigencies of the hour were more responsible for it than any spirit of relenting on the part of Lieutenant Cole.

In the mean while, Major Richards had found his place and opportunity, and made his dispositions.

Our scouts had reported Blazer's command as moving southward up the Charlestown road, which at Myers's shop intersects a road running thence eastward to the Shenandoah River. Major Richards at once moved us past this shop down the river road as if in a great hurry. Of this he took care that Blazer should be duly informed by a citizen upon his arrival at the cross-roads. Marching perhaps a quarter of a mile down this road, he reached a narrow strip of woods, not more than a hundred yards wide, which borders the road on the south and runs parallel with it a considerable distance. Just back of the woods was an open field, which sloped rather abruptly from the woods into a deep valley and then rises again toward the south, in full view of the road at this time of the year. Along the top of this back hill, on the southern boundary of the field, ran an old rail fence. From this fence to the road the distance was perhaps three hundred yards.

Now, passing through these woods, Major Richards left a few men scattered here and there in them, as though they were scouts. Just beyond them to the south, under the brow of the hill, Company B was drawn up in line of battle, facing the road, so disposed that the enemy would not see them until one or the other should reach the hill top. Still farther to the south, down in the vale, Company A was halted in line of march. And so we waited.

As we expected, when Blazer reached Myers's

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JOHN R. TILLETT
Company H

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shop he was informed that we had just left there in something of a hurry. On he pushed after us, at double quick. When he reached the woods on the river road, and was moving past them, his attention was attracted by our decoys, which had been left there. A few shots passed between them, when he halted his men and faced them in line toward us, and was about to deploy skirmishers into the woods. At this crucial moment Company A moved hurriedly out of the valley into his view, upon the southern slope of the old field, toward the back fence, through which some of our men were seen tearing gaps for dear life. The impression was at once made upon him that we had taken fright, and were in full retreat. Here was his chance. The gods were propitious; the man should not be wanting. Ordering a charge, on he brought his men pell-mell through the woods after us.

This was what Richards had calculated on. Company B sprang to the charge, and, to Blazer's utter surprise, met him with a yell and a volley at the top of the hill. His men were of the true metal, however, and stood the surprise and the shock like heroes. The two lines closed up, and for more than a minute (and that's an age for such business) stood horse to horse, emptying their revolvers into each other's faces. At this point murderous work was done on both sides.

But as Company B made its charge Company A halted in its retreat, and, at the word from Hatcher, faced about on the instant, dashed back at full

speed, rushed up the hill into the woods, and struck Blazer's still struggling and astonished men on the left flank. Not even a halt was made, and we carried the enemy in hopeless, reckless rout back through the woods into the road, and on past Myers's shop to—well, I don't know where. The truth is, that all except five or six, who were unusually well mounted or got off in good time, were overtaken and captured.

Captain Blazer stood his ground among the last desperate fighters, and only when he saw that the day was hopelessly lost and his veterans had fallen thick around him, did he betake himself to flight. He was well mounted and made a race as gallant as was his fight. More than a mile up the road, and away ahead of the main body, he was overtaken by Syd. Ferguson, a burly young Ranger. Pursuer and pursued had emptied their pistols, and Blazer paid no heed to the youth's calls on him to halt until Ferguson finally, running beside him, knocked him prone in the road with the butt of his revolver.

While we were rushing pell-mell up the road, Rangers and Federals running side by side, behind and before, dashing mud into each other's faces, I nearly participated in a peculiar class of tragedy to which some of our best men at times fell victims. I came up with a great burly fellow who was forging ahead. He paid no attention to my calls to surrender, and spurring closer, I rammed the muzzle of my revolver against his broad back. The psychological influence of it was prompt, for before

I could pull the trigger he turned his head and John Foster's big gray eyes rolled at me. I nearly fell from my horse as I realized how near I had come to killing one of my chums. Of all the sensations of that day—and the day was full of them—I believe that was my heaviest jolt.

He wore one of those new Confederate uniforms which, saturated with rain and bespattered with mud, was undistinguishable from Union blue, and out of his mask of red clay no features but his eyes were recognizable. When he told this story to his little wife, long years afterward, I could not clearly make out whether the look which she turned on me was mostly of gratitude to Providence for its interposition, or—of contempt for my being such a fool as not to know her boy under all circumstances.

As the rout passed Myers's shop I saw a Federal officer strike out from the main body of flying men, evidently to seek his own salvation. My horse, which was strong and fleet, made after him, and in less than a hundred yards' run I was alongside him. On my call to surrender he halted and raised both hands. I saw that his pistols were in his holster, and leaned over to unbuckle his belt and secure them. As I was bent over my attention was attracted by the sound of a horse's feet, and I raised my head to see Puryear rein up behind us. His face was distorted with anger or excitement, and he was pointing a cocked pistol at the officer's head.

Puryear was, of course, released from his captivity as soon as Blazer's column broke. I learned after-

ward that he at once fell upon his guard and wrested his revolver from him and fell into the chase. Lieutenant Cole became the single object of his pursuit, and, his eye once falling upon him, he had followed him like a Nemesis throughout the whole desperate race until he came up with him in my possession.

I raised my hand and cried, "Don't shoot this man; he has surrendered!"

Puryear answered, with an oath, "The rascal tried to hang me this morning." I knew that he had been in the enemy's hands, and asked the prisoner if what he charged were true. There was a moment's hesitation, and no response; then the crack of a pistol, and Lieutenant Cole fell against my side and rolled to the ground between his horse and mine. I dismounted and took his belt, with a pair of revolvers, from around him. Let me pay this tribute to his memory—both pistols were empty. I believe I failed to state that when I overtook him he was bleeding profusely from a wound in the breast, which he had received in the fight. As I moved away he rolled his dying eyes toward me with a look I shall never forget, and I would gladly have tarried to give him such comfort as I could. But this was no time for sympathy, and I hurried back to the road.

A soldier who shortly afterward went to him and got his watch and a small sum of money from his person told me that he was dead when he found him.

Perhaps somebody will be interested in the following sequel, which came to my knowledge a quarter of a century after the events narrated above.

I was sitting by my fireside last winter discussing this fight with a friend whose family resided near the scene and were eye-witnesses to much that I have written. He told me that his father had assisted in burying the Federal dead, and took special charge of the remains of Lieutenant Cole, with whom he had had a pleasant acquaintance. A few days after the fight—possibly the next day—a detachment of the First Pennsylvania Cavalry rode up to his house and asked if he knew where the Lieutenant's body was buried. When he told them that he himself had buried it he was asked if the body showed any signs of having been rifled. The questioners were very anxious about this, because, they said, he had a large sum of money in a belt around him. This information, of course, made Mr. Chamberlayne, the citizen, very nervous, also, for if the money should not be found his own position might be made not altogether a happy one. So he carried the party to the grave without delay, and the body was exhumed. Greatly to his relief the belt, with the money, was found intact. His comrades said the amount was $1,800, but I can scarcely imagine the circumstances that would induce him to carry so much money about him in his precarious kind of life. However, soldiers were curious people. The sum was considerable, at any rate. How like kicking himself, when he reads this, will the man feel who got his

watch and purse! I cannot myself say that I do not regret that I did not carry my own researches in that direction further.

Perhaps that dying look expressed a wish to communicate the presence of the treasure to me, who at least made an effort to save his life.

How the news of this fight reached the enemy is told officially by General Stevenson:

"Headquarters Military District of Harper's Ferry, "Harper's Ferry, Nov. 19, 1864.

"Lieutenant-Colonel J. W. Forsyth, Chief-of-Staff, Middle Military Division, in the field.

"Colonel: Two of Captain Blazer's men came in this morning, Privates Harris and Johnson. They report that Mosby, with 300 men, attacked Blazer near Kabletown yesterday about 11 o'clock. They say that the entire command, with the exception of themselves, was either captured or killed.

"I have ordered out Major Congdon, with 300 Twelfth Pennsylvania Cavalry, to Kabletown, to bury dead and take care of wounded, if any, and report all facts he can learn. Shall immediately furnish report as soon as received.

"Respectfully,

"John D. Stevenson, "Brigadier-General."

Captain Blazer was sent to Libby Prison, where, in a card printed in the *Richmond Enquirer* in 1864, he said he was well treated. He survived the war, but fell a victim to yellow fever at Gallipolis, Ohio, about the end of October, 1878.

CHAPTER XI

THE FIGHT AT DULANY'S

But things did not always go our way. The fight at Dulany's illustrated how simple and apparently conclusive combinations sometimes do not work.

One morning a detachment of nearly two hundred of the Eighth Illinois cavalry went out from the Plains on a scout toward Upperville. Captain Frankland got together about a hundred of our men and fell on their trail. As they approached Upperville in the afternoon we came up with them, having gotten between them and their camp, and Frankland proceeded to make his arrangements for another "Dranesville affair."

The turnpike from Winchester to Alexandria—the great highway of Mosby's Confederacy—passing through Upperville runs practically east and west. About a mile east of Upperville, at No. 6, the road from Rectortown comes out on the pike. Westward from this point for perhaps a half mile a narrow strip of woods ran along the south side of the pike, back of which the open fields stretched to Henry Dulany's mansion, which sat on rising ground nearly another half mile away.

We were out on the Rectortown road in the neighborhood of Dulany's when we learned that the

enemy was approaching No. 6, up the turnpike. The news bringing the assurance that matters were now coming to a crisis was received with great jubilation. I never saw our boys keener for a fight, or knew them to go into one in better spirits. And this, notwithstanding the usual incident which occurred when we came to form the battle array down under a hill east of Dulany's house. It presents a characteristic which I shall pause to set forth.

We had no special regulation as to the location in the ranks of individual men—whether on the march, on parade, or in formation for battle. The men just fell in, at all times, just where the opening was convenient. I noticed that when on the march, especially when we passed farm-houses and villages where "bright eyes were sparkling for us," the front ranks were always filled by the fancy fellows who wore the waving plumes and the gay gilt. I noticed, too, that when the formations for fight were being made up these same gentry always had something about their trappings to adjust, or some other personal matter to look to, which detained them while the practical utility men got into their vacant places. Therefore we seldom had a chance to "follow these plumes of Navarre amid the battle's smoke." In this way it happened that when we turned into Dulany's field and moved toward the Federal's flank, I had gotten pushed into the first set of fours beside Lieut. Ab Wrenn, who was leading the column.

As I stated before, the boys were almost hilarious, laughing and jesting; and I recollect that Will Anderson, riding in the second file, was singing an extemporaneous parody on the "Vacant Chair," in which he substituted Yankee saddles for chairs, and multiplied them indefinitely. Whatever may have been the excellencies of his poesy in other respects, it certainly was not like that of the Seers of old, inspired prophecy; for it was not many minutes before he was singing a different song and the others were feeling the force of the old adage, "He laughs best who laughs last."

When our party turned into the field another detachment kept on down the No. 6 road toward the turnpike. I suppose their mission was to strike the enemy at another point at the same time we attacked them, and it seems that another party was held in reserve, possibly for cutting off the escape of fugitives. They were never called on for that purpose at least, and I do not know what became of them.

We rode across the field toward the Dulany house at a brisk trot, keeping behind a swell of ground which stretched from the house eastward and hid the enemy from our view. Then we raised the hill diagonally, and I caught my first sight of the men whom we were hunting. It seems that somehow they had gotten knowledge of our presence and had advanced a considerable distance south of the woods and were moving toward us in three platoons. They must have been within three hundred yards of us

then. When we appeared they seemed to adopt converging lines, still moving toward us in a walk, so that when we came up to them in front of Dulany's mansion the three bodies had practically consolidated and our little squadron of less than fifty men was "up against the whole show."

As we trotted down the hill, I noticed an ominous silence behind us. I recollect a feeling of astonishment that we had gotten so close without the customary rush and yell. I believe that no firing had been done by either party up to that moment. Instead of the call to the wild rush, I saw Lieutenant Wrenn draw back his horse. He had seen what I now turned my head and looked upon with a sickening shock—everything behind the two front files was swerving around in front of the house toward the barn-yard gate at the west. They had recognized the helplessness of the situation and promptly proceeded to arrange "to fight again another day."

Just then the Illinoisans opened fire on us with Spencer rifles, and three men were knocked out of our first two files. George Turberville at my left side caught it in the thigh; the man beyond him to the left was killed, and George Gulick, just behind me, was struck plumb in the forehead. Dazed and unable to take in the catastrophe, we five fools sat there until another volley swept through us and brought down two more of our number. Then, half crazy, we rode down in front of the line of smoking carbines and emptied a revolver apiece. We were then close

enough to distinguish the buttons on their coats. After that came chaos.

When I reached the barn-yard gate some of our men were going through it, all mixed up with the Yankees, some of whom had rushed up. Others pressed after us through the barn-yard, down a narrow lane which crossed a branch at the foot of the hill; but they did not follow us into the field at the end of the lane, into which our men retreated. Indeed, I think very few, if any, of them got as far as the end of the lane. They evidently did not have sufficient confidence in their position as masters of the situation to feel like taking any liberties with it.

Out in the old field our men were quickly rallied by some officer whom I cannot recall, and moved back to the gate of the lane. Here they were met by an irritating fire from the long-range guns of the Yankees up on the hill in the barn-yard and around the mansion-house. The hiss of the bullets and their pattering on the fence made our men restless, and there was a determination not to stay there; but the sentiment was divided as to the direction in which to go. Some of them just could not realize that we were whipped. Cab Maddux and another one of those fellows who "didn't have sense enough to know danger when they saw it" dashed back up the lane, and got as far as the barn-yard again before they discovered that the path of glory was all their own. Its loneliness impelled them to desert it by the quickest possible route. A heavier hail of bullets just

then had determined the rest of our detachment to depart; but they moved off across the field in good order—or, at least in full possession of themselves—and unpursued.

I had been separated from them; and when I returned to the gate, under fire from a squad that sought to cut me off, I found no comrade in sight, except Charley Hawling's horse, which was quietly cropping grass. In the first rush down the lane Charley's horse fell sprawling and delivered his rider into the road, laid out, apparently dead. He was one of the devoted eight, and as we left him I felt some sense of the irony of the fate that brought him untouched through the fires of that hell, to such a comparatively inglorious end. He lives, however, to tell the tale of how some Yankees roused him to consciousness and carried him back toward the barnyard, where he saw two lines of their fellows drawn up. When they came to the gate Charley thought it too narrow for him and his three captors to pass through it abreast, so he held back to give them precedence. The backward movement seemed to accord with his feelings and was adopted by him with such vigor and promptness that he was some distance down the hill again before they got their guns to working; but when they did so, it was to such effect as to make the road too hot for him and lift him over the fence into the bottom of a spring branch in one of the out-lots of Dulany's grounds. When the firing ceased he arose and made for a convenient hen

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A. E. RICHARDS
Captain Company B; promoted Major First Squadron

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house, into the top of which he ensconced himself and remained there until the Federals departed.

I do not think that many Yankees followed us south of Dulany's house. I know that there were none south of the house fifteen minutes after we rallied, except a few with long-range guns moving about the back yard. The fact is, that Lieutenant Grogan was entertaining them on the eastern side. It was thought that the fight failed because Grogan did not come to time and strike them simultaneously with us. He came to time, all right, but was the victim of bad scouting. We selected our ground and then failed to know it, and that ignorance was fatal to us. I never learned the secret of the disaster until I got it from the lips of Lieut. Font Beattie this blessed August, 1906. He says that when Grogan's men charged they ran up against a wide and deep ditch, trimmed with a ragged rail fence. It was absolutely impassable; and in following it in search of a crossing place, they were led away from the Yankees; and not until they reached the place where the Upperville road crossed it, could they resume their line of approach. In the mean while, the Federals had given us our medicine, and were then ready to administer to Grogan; which they proceeded to do with promptness and dispatch.

The rising ground intervened between Grogan's party and ours, so that we could see nothing of his movements. Doubtless if we had done so, we would have consummated our threatened dash back up the

lane and relieved the pressure on him; and there might have been a different tale to tell of that afternoon. But—

> "Of all *fool* words of tongue or pen,
> The idlest tell what might have been."

The cold, sad record is, we were whipped in detail; and the Eighth Illinois did it. And I will add that they were worthy of their laurels.

Among those of our men who were shot in front of the Dulany house was Joe Bryan. His chum, Charley Dear, saw him down at the front reeling on his horse—perhaps, heard a call from him—and worked his way some distance through the storm to him. Charley's idea was a rescue, and he called to Joe to fly. But the youth, without even down on his cheek, braced his lank, callow form to its height and, Charley says, in a fine frenzy shouted, "A Bryan never flies from a foe!"

"This Bryan is—an irresponsible." Well, that's a liberally polite translation of what his more practical friend did say as he threw his arm about him and bore him bodily away.

As the evening shadows lengthened, bare-headed, depressed and alone, except for Hawling's horse, whose disreputable appearance added nothing to relieve the situation, I rode over the Goose Creek hills and left Dulany's field to history.

The MS. of the foregoing was submitted to Mr. E. A. Worrell of Company C, Eighth Illinois Cavalry, and a Past Commander of the Post of Survivors of that regiment, with whom the author has formed a very pleasant acquaintance. He writes under date of August 21, 1906:

"I read it at our Regimental reunion at Minneapolis on the 14th, during the National Encampment of the G. A. R. Our boys were so taken with it that they had a number of copies of it struck off to take home with them. I was in Company C and was with Corporal Prut in advance of our advance guard. As we came up the hill about opposite the Dulany mansion on the pike, two of our boys were coming up the hill from toward Upperville. They and we stopped. Prut said, 'You take the one on the dark horse and I will take the other.' His man fell dead from his horse. Mine wheeled and ran, the loose horse following him. I gave them a chase and came near being captured myself, as the Johnnies got between me and our advance guard and flankers. Soon after this we were engaged in the prettiest fight I ever saw. My company was in front of your line, that formed on the level pasture field after coming out of the timber north of the mansion."

From a paper by Sergt. W. A. McHenry, Company C, Eighth Illinois, read at the same reunion, I make the following extracts:

"Of all the organizations in the Confederate Army I think the Eighth Illinois remembers most vividly

Colonel Mosby. And I have often wondered what kind of a man he was that he could give us such warm receptions. I can assure you that when we were ordered into his field of operations there were no stragglers—it was just as dangerous in rear as in front. Our communications were cut and there was no other alternative than to fight our way to our destination and return. In the fall of 1864 we were encamped at Rectortown for a short time, from which we took side excursions to the various receptions. One was with Captain Lincoln in command of six companies of our regiment. You will remember we went to Middleburg, thence up the pike to Upperville. We had no more than left Middleburg when it became apparent that we needed skirmishers in rear and flanks as well as in front. And those in rear felt like keeping as far in front as possible so that the zip zap might not reach them. It was not long before it was dangerous to get too far to the front, as you could see Mosby's gallant chargers getting ready to wipe up the dust with us. However, it was willed to be otherwise.

"I take the following from Dr. Hard's history of the regiment: Lieutenant Clapp with Company K in advance held their ground against great odds as long as they could, and finally fell back, giving away to the right and left to let Lieutenant Corbet charge the enemy with his squadron, consisting of Companies C and B. Meanwhile, about one hundred and ten men charged the advance in impetuous style, but the gallant and steady bearing of Captain Wing's

squadron, Companies G and H, saved our men from any damage. Captain Wing and Lieutenant DeLancy, of Companies G and H, both reserved the fire of their commands until the enemy came up, and then poured in a well-concentrated volley. Just then Captain Berry came up with his Company L, and with a well-directed volley sent the enemy flying, and joined Captain Wing in the headlong pursuit after the Confederates. It soon became a general scramble to pick up prisoners. After the forces became scattered, a number of the enemy tried to escape through a lane in the field at a large house, but our forces were upon them before they could get the gate open and they were captured. Thinking that we had gained honor enough for one day, we wended our way toward camp at Rectortown across the fields. * * *

"I have mentioned these few receptions that Colonel Mosby and his men gave us because they are familiar to me. Other comrades might give many more and I presume that Colonel Mosby and his men might give us accounts of meeting us at other times when it would not sound so well on our side. But I am willing to risk that they will say that we never showed the white feather in their front and we can say with equal truth that we considered that to meet Mosby and his men at close range meant certain death. * * * We are very sorry that Colonel Mosby could not be here with us. It had been arranged to give him a warm reception, not, however, that kind that he gave us forty-one years ago in Virginia, but a soldier's welcome."

CHAPTER XII

DRAWING LOTS FOR LIFE

On August 17, 1864, General Sheridan reported to General Grant: "Mosby has annoyed me and captured a few wagons. We hanged one and shot six of his men yesterday." And again on August 19 he reported: "Guerrillas give me great annoyance, but I am quietly disposing of numbers of them." And again on August 22: "We have disposed of quite a number of Mosby's men."

On October 29, 1864, Colonel Mosby reported to General Lee: "During my absence from my command the enemy captured six of my men near Front Royal. These were immediately hanged by order, and in the presence of General Custer. They also hanged another lately in Rappahannock. It is my purpose to hang an equal number of Custer's men whenever I capture them." This dispatch was endorsed by General Lee as follows: "I have directed Colonel Mosby through his adjutant [who delivered the dispatch to him] to hang an equal number of Custer's men in retaliation for those executed by him." Which instructions were "cordially approved" by the Secretary of War.

The foregoing is from the Records of the Rebellion. They are the cold recitals of history. I submit below some of the "reading between the

lines," some of the actual human experience of passion, pathos and suffering which made the history of those days.

One morning in the summer of 1864 a detachment from Mosby's command attacked a body of Federals at Front Royal, Virginia. Through some unaccountable mistake of our scouts, what we took for a foraging party turned out—after we had gotten into them—to be a heavy column of cavalry and artillery. In cutting our way out of the desperate situation, a Federal officer was run down by the wayside; and in that delirium, the delirium born of tasting of blood which often catches men on such occasions, some of the Rangers fired shots at the prostrate man as they passed him, some of which took effect. He survived, however—at least long enough to give his comrades some account of the affair, which was made an excuse for what it now appears had already been determined upon as a policy toward us.

General Custer had six of our men, who were captured at that time, executed under circumstances which, as they were narrated to us, seemed unnecessarily cruel. They were led through the streets of Front Royal with ropes around their necks—one poor fellow, named Long, led before the very eyes of his mother pleading for mercy for her boy—and hanged like dogs upon a hill upon the outskirts of the village. Upon one of their bodies left swinging by the roadside was this placard, "This shall be the fate of all of Mosby's men."

This was practically an unfurling of the black flag against our command; and, as a matter of fact, was followed by the summary execution of several others of our comrades who happened to fall into the power of General Custer; notably, the execution of young Ab. Willis—an account of which is thus given by an eye-witness: "After capturing him they selected a spot where stood a tall, slender white-oak sapling. Man after man ascended to the top, until their weight bore it to the ground, where they held it firm while they pinioned his arms behind him and placed a halter around his neck. Then making the halter fast to the extreme end of the sapling, at a given signal they simultaneously relinquished their hold, when he could be seen swinging back and forth, until the sapling had spent its force, his lifeless body dangling in the branches close to its trunk." When cut down he had a placard on his breast saying, "Hung in retaliation for a Union soldier *said* to have been killed by one of Mosby's men."

For the protection of his men, as well as for the vindication of his position as an officer of the Confederate Army, it became necessary for Colonel Mosby to resort to that last recourse of war, the *lex talionis*.

Many Federal soldiers were captured by us during the weeks that followed, and with the exception of some who happened to fall into the hands of relatives or special friends of the murdered men, under circumstances that precluded interference by our

officers, they were all sent back to the Confederate authorities as prisoners of war. Colonel Mosby deferred his contemplated reprisal until a sufficient number from *Custer's own command* should be captured to vindicate upon them our honor and dignity without making Colonel Mosby chargeable with wanton cruelty.

After a while we returned from a raid into the Shenandoah Valley with twenty-six of Custer's men; and it was determined to select six from among them to placate the *Manes* of our dead comrades—and this was to be done by lot.

Accordingly, one bright morning, at Rectortown the prisoners were drawn up in line, heavily guarded, and informed of the ordeal that awaited them. God grant that His sun may never shine upon another such scene!

As the adjutant read the order, reciting the sad facts that led up to it, and declaring the dreadful climax that faced us, his solemn tones were more than once interrupted by emotion. The poor fellows had been putting the best face they could upon the prospect of a long imprisonment, and were chatting and jesting with some heart. I leave the reader to imagine the awful change that passed along the devoted line as they realized the import of the adjutant's words.

Our own men, too, were scarcely less affected. The prisoners had been in our company a day or two, and, as was always the case after the first embarrassment of capture had passed, quite pleasant

relations had been established between them and us. We had ridden together, laughed and talked, and divided our rations and tobacco with them; and indeed between some of them and us quite a feeling of comradeship existed. The precipitation of the present state of affairs was a shock to all of us.

I saw the eyes of more than one Ranger fill with tears, and dear old Harry Hatcher—the man who had led Company A in most of its desperate charges and whom Colonel Mosby has with his own hand written down in history as "the bravest of the brave" —actually wept like a child.

There were twenty-six little slips of paper placed in a hat, upon six of which were numbers. The hat was then to be passed along the line of the prisoners and from it each was to draw a slip. The men who should draw the *numbered* ones were doomed.

My station was at the farthest end of the line from that at which the grim Ranger with the hat started upon his ominous errand. As each man stretched his hand and drew his lot, one could read one of the most pathetic chapters in human experience. The hard-featured, bronzed old veterans reached for the fateful slips with an appearance of stolid indifference which did not change whether a blank or a number was withdrawn. The bright-faced, hopeful young men, to whom life was sweet, met the test with expressions of keen appreciation of its import, which changed to glad relief, dull despair, or manly resignation as they eagerly looked at their tickets, while some, alas,—and not all

youths,—had scarcely nerve to stand the strain, and broke down utterly when their blood-shot eyes caught sight of the fatal numbers.

I was specially interested in three of them who stood near me. Two of them were drummer-boys —mere lads—whom it seemed hard indeed to subject to such a death. In fact, an appeal was made to Colonel Mosby in their behalf, but he did not feel that it would be just to the others to discriminate. Perhaps he thought that there could be no gradation in such a savage phase of war. Perhaps he recalled the pink and white faces of his own little lads who had been executed at Front Royal. The third was a handsome young lieutenant of artillery whose name was Brewster, I think. He was a gentleman, intelligent, refined, courteous; and had won the good-will of all of us. One feature of his case which particularly interested us was that he met that morning for the first time since the beginning of the war, his brother, who was a major in the commissary department, and had a few days before been captured out of a different command on this side of the mountains. You can understand that there was one heart beside his own that beat more rapidly as the hat approached him, and held fast its throbbing while he tried his fate; and, believe me, there were many who shared his brother's joy as the pure white scrap of paper was exposed.

But what of the little drummer-boys?

One of them stood dazed throughout it all. The other broke out in piteous lamentations which even

yet sometimes ring in my ears. Now he would bewail, in heart-rending tones, his poor old mother whose only support he said he was, and who was awaiting in her far-away cottage the coming home that would never be; now he would call in most pitiful terms upon the great and good God who sat beyond the bright skies. As the hat drew near his cries became more piteous, his prayers more importunate, more hysterical.

It has reached him; he sobs. He lifts his eyes to heaven. "O God, spare me!" He stretches forth his hand—"Precious Jesus, pity me!" He reaches into the hat—"Merciful God!" He withdraws it; looks—"Damn it, ain't I lucky!" he cries, as he leaps up, strikes his feet together, and fillips the paper to the ground.

I cannot describe the revulsion of feeling that shocked us all.

But our rising indignation was cut short by infinite pity as his poor little companion drew from the hat the last fatal number, and fell to the ground in a heap as if a bullet had gone to his vitals.

This last result seemed horrible. He was scarcely in his teens. Surely such a sacrifice to the God of War must be averted. Could men, brave men, consent to this?

Wait! While our officers were consulting and importuning the Colonel, a whispered conference was going on among the prisoners who had escaped the draft. And now, out of the very arms of his brother, who had just received him back from death

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City Attorney of Louisville, Kentucky

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as it were, the artillery officer stepped forward and said that, at his instance, his fellows had agreed to submit to another draft for the selection of a substitute for the lad, if we would consent.

Inasmuch as the proposition was volunteered by them, Colonel Mosby acceded, and preparations were forthwith made for the second ordeal. Again the hat passed down the line of heroes (for did not this sacrifice vindicate their claim to be such?) until—the irony of fate!—it reached the young lieutenant, who this time drew the marked slip.

I believe he stood it better than the rest of us. He simply asked opportunity to write a farewell letter to his wife and that it and his watch and ring should be sent through the lines to her. I think I never saw Colonel Mosby more affected than when he gave him the assurance that they should be sent at the first opportunity.

And then the arrangements were made for departure, the last farewells were said; and the doomed little band were marched away toward the mountains by their executioners.

How they were taken back to the Valley, and, in the solemn hours of the night, from the limb of a great oak that until recently still stood beside the highway beyond Berryville, had their brave lives choked and shot out of them, is a matter of history which I need not repeat.

Did I say "they." There was at least one exception. This, too, is recorded in the pages of history,

else one might charge my imagination with a strain after poetic justice.

As the sad party was crossing the Blue Ridge it met Captain Mountjoy of Company D returning from the Valley with another batch of prisoners from Custer's cavalry. In the course of the interview between the parties Lieutenant Brewster recognized a Masonic emblem upon the person of Captain Mountjoy, and gave him the "signal of distress" of that fraternity. To this our captain promptly responded, and took the responsibility of substituting one of his own captives in the place of his brother Mason, whom he brought on back with him.

It is needless to say that the rest of us applauded his action and greeted the Lieutenant with sincere rejoicing. Colonel Mosby, however, reprimanded his favorite officer most severely for interfering with the decrees of fate, declaring his "command was no Masonic lodge." But I believe in my heart that it was only for the sake of discipline, and that his secret satisfaction was as great as ours.

Then, too, one of the condemned men made a desperate "strike for liberty" as his would-be executioner approached him to perform the "last sad offices" upon him, and succeeded in escaping in the darkness. I never learned whether this was the "substitute" or not; but let us believe it was, and that the "Fates" thus vindicated themselves from human interference.

CHAPTER XIII

A LIVELY RIDE BEFORE BREAKFAST

Hugh Waters and I lived at his mother's home, about one mile south of Middleburg, a home just on the far edge of a large body of timber, which extended more than half way to the village. On the east side of her farm, and within a quarter of a mile of the house, ran the road from the Plains to Middleburg; and about the same distance to the west was the road from Salem (now Marshall) to Middleburg.

During the winter of 1864-5 there was a heavy fall of snow, which laid on the ground for some weeks and became covered with a thick crust. One cold night Hugh and I camped out in a rock-brake on his mother's farm, within a hundred yards of the Plains road; but the rocky cliff, at the foot of which we made our bed and tied our horses, and the clump of trees about it hid us from sight from the road. Indeed, we relied on the cold weather to keep our enemies at home, and the warning which we would get from the sounds of their traveling over the snow if they should have the enterprise to turn out.

We slept the sleep of unconscious innocence. The next morning about sunrise we were awakened by Mrs. Waters's negro man, Edmund, with the information that a large body of Yankees had marched

along the Plains road a short while before, had called at the house to pay their respects to us and gone on toward Middleburg. It is needless to say that we made a very hasty toilet and got away from there in short order. We left Edmund to take charge of our bedding and hurried off toward Middleburg to take observations.

When we reached the Salem road we met Lieut. Font Beattie, who also had been induced to rise early by a party scouting uncomfortably near his quarters. He assumed responsibility for our movements, and led us on toward Middleburg in pursuit of information and, incidentally, adventure. Well, we succeeded in finding both.

We followed the road to the top of a hill on the edge of the town and saw the streets filled with blue-coated cavalry. At the same time the wearers of the blue coats saw us, and hastened to exchange greetings with us. We felt, however, that salutes at a distance were all that the occasion required of us, and retired with some precipitancy in the direction whence we came. The Yankees insisted on closer associations and pressed their attentions with great ardor.

We were making good our courteous purpose to leave them in possession of that neighborhood, and were getting out on the Salem road in fine shape, when we rose on a little hill about a half mile out. And there, coming toward us, and not more than two hundred yards away, was a road full of Yankee

cavalry! On each side of us was an abominable stone fence, of the sort, you know, which very few horses will jump. As we pulled up, the enemy in front commenced firing. It did look like a hopeless situation.

But Beattie was not the man to give up as long as there was daylight between him and the toils. A short distance behind us we had passed a gap in the stone fence which would let us into a field and to the big woods beyond it; and our leader turned us back to it, just as some of the Salem party sprang up the road toward us. The pursuers from Middleburg were scarcely within good range as the last one of us jumped through the gap, but a good shot "gave pause" to the foremost of them. Somehow, both parties of the Yankees found ways through the fence too; and in a moment the situation was this—we three running by a straight line for the woods, and Yankees to the left oblique, and Yankees to the right oblique, making after us with absolute assurance of running us down. If we should make the woods, they were barren of foliage and almost as open as the field. But just within them was a hill, and over it—well, the Yankees didn't know what. And neither did we, for that matter; but the religion of a Mosby man was never to throw up his hands as long as he could stick to his horse, for he trusted much to that "chapter of accidents" which is in every book of fate. It contained deliverance for us that morning.

The snow was at least six inches deep and, as I stated, was covered with a thick crust, and it greatly

affected the speed of all parties. I was riding a Yankee horse, quite recently "acquired." I was soon dismayed to find that he was falling behind my companions; and, what was worse, he did not seem to care if he was. The shooting and yelling and my vigorous application of the spur made no impression on him. Whether it was actual leg-weariness, or sheer brute stubbornness, or the aroused affinity for his old companions, I do not know. But the cold fact is that when Beattie and Waters rode into the woods, my horse had slowed down into a walk and was a considerable distance behind them.

The pursuers were then scarcely a hundred yards from me, and were calling to me in jeering tones, between shots, "Come out of that overcoat, Johnnie!" and other like pleasant salutations. The truth was that I had on a splendid new overcoat—one of the fruits of the Greenback raid—and their remarks about it made me feel sick. I verily believe that it was my salvation at that moment, though. The heartless fellows were close enough to see that it was an unusually fine one, glistening with brass buttons and some other garish trimming, and they evidently took me for an officer. Now, do not lose sight of that, for I think it was the key to what followed.

As my companions were riding away over the hill in the woods, and I realized that my horse had flunked on me, in my desperation I involuntarily called out to them to stop and take me up. They wheeled and commenced firing.

The Yankees doubtless heard me call to them to stop, without distinguishing what I said about taking me up. They saw my horse drop into a quiet, dignified pace, and did not understand that it was not due to my management of him. So, attributing to the "officer" a most magnificent nerve, they assumed that I was now rallying my men from the ambush into which we had decoyed them. The manly response of Beattie and Waters clinched the matter. And I pledge you my word of honor that the whole Federal party pulled up within almost touching distance of me and let me march in a quiet walk over the hill. I soon came up with my friends and we rode away unpursued.

CHAPTER XIV

THE HAMILTON FIGHT

One of the results of the great Burning Raid made by the Federals was the destruction of our stores of provender. As will be readily understood, our horses had to be kept in tip-top condition, and to secure supplies was a prime necessity.

Near the center of Loudoun County was, and still is for that matter, a rich section known as the Quaker settlement, occupied by Quakers, and even in war times successfully farmed by that thrifty sect. They were of course non-combatants, but they were, with few exceptions, loyal to the United States Government; indeed, I may say, that with most of them their loyalty amounted to offensive partisanship. Their barns and store-houses were full, and this was so obviously a provision of Providence for our necessities that Colonel Mosby could not hesitate to appropriate it.

A detachment of something like a hundred and fifty of our men were sent up into this Egypt to impress wagons and haul the golden grain away to our homes in southern Loudoun and Fauquier. Those were merry days of the ingathering of our crops. The spring was early and the weather fine, and the harvesting progressed most satisfactorily.

Through the days the boys rode from farm to farm, and their happy songs lilted over the hills. I think those staid old Quakers must have had their patience tried by the incessant plaints about Katie Wells and Gentle Annie, which the fresh spring breezes bore to their unaccustomed ears.

But there were other things which vexed their righteous souls more than this, I doubt not, and even more than the loss of their corn. The men were billetted, in squads of five or six, around among the farm-houses, and they had to be fed on Union victuals. But I must do our entertainers the justice to testify that they suffered with great grace, and if they kept back anything better than they set before us they were pretty high old livers when all to themselves at home. I think the motherly instincts of the good housewives stirred with a sweet comfort as they saw the boys enjoy their pies and jams; and I am sure that the eyes of the demure maidens flashed quite naturally as they served apples, nearly as rosy as their cheeks, to the soldier boys, who did not fail to give some expression of their appreciation.

While all on the surface was so lovely, we knew that these same gentle folk were in close touch with the Federal forces across the Potomac, and that the "grapevine telegraph" kept their friends constantly advised of the situation. We knew, too, that their devotion to peace would not deter them from any kind of cooperation with their said friends which would secure our early retirement to the quiet rest of

prison life, or even the more perfect peace which prevails where the wicked cease from troubling—them. So, in anticipation of some such movement, every morning the men were rendezvoused at Hamilton. If the reports from our scouts and pickets were favorable, they were dispersed to pursue the duties of their new vocation.

One morning they were not disbanded; the expected was about to happen. Hamilton is a small village situated about the center of the Quaker district on the turnpike from Snicker's Gap, in the Blue Ridge Mountains, to Washington. Harper's Ferry, which was then occupied by the Federals, lies less than twenty miles off toward the north. The road from that point into Loudoun passes for twelve miles through a narrow valley which is bounded by the Blue Ridge on the west, and absolutely shut off from the rest of the county on the east by a steep and rugged range called the Short Hill. There is no practicable passage over it between the Potomac and its southern end, where nestles the little village of Hillsborough. Through this valley a Federal force could come without any risk of discovery until they should emerge into "God's country" at the mountain village, thence broad highways led into middle Loudoun. One highway, scarcely six miles long, stretched over high hills and through deep dales to Hamilton; and another to Purcellville on the turnpike, a couple of miles west of Hamilton.

This morning our scouts reported that a squad of

them had found a force of Federals at Hillsborough the previous afternoon, and that the Yankees had chased them several miles and then returned between the Hills; that the force appeared to consist of a considerable wagon train escorted by a regiment of cavalry, and that it was then moving out toward Purcellville.

A wagon train with a cavalry escort was just in our line of business, and the men fell all into a flutter. But Colonel Mosby was a classical scholar, and the thing looked so inviting on its face that it reminded him of the "Greeks bearing gifts." So the command was moved back to Lincoln, a mile or so south of the pike, while scouts were sent out to take observations.

Sure enough, they found the wagon train moving quietly down the road toward Hamilton, with its escort of cavalry in close attendance. These latter seemed very jealous of our too near approach, and opened fire at long range upon our party of scouts, and chased them back a short distance toward Lincoln. But the sharp eyes of our men had discovered that the innocent looking wagons were modern reproductions of the Trojan horse, and every one of them was loaded up with infantry. Upon their reporting to Colonel Mosby, he sent them back to the pike to move along their flank and keep him advised of their movements. I wish to put on record the names of that scouting party, for they did good service that day—keeping in touch with the Federals' left flank

all the way from Purcellville down, and getting touched up pretty lively themselves whenever they stuck their heads over the hills or emerged from the skirting woods. They were Bob Eastham, Jim Burgess, Towny Vandevanter, Will Vandevanter, John Adams, and just before their final service were joined by Manning and Jim Wiltshire, the latter of whom took charge of them and brought on the collision.

The road out of Hamilton takes a very eccentric course toward Lincoln. Leaving the turnpike about the middle of the former village it runs southeasterly, past open lots and farm-houses and then through woods, for perhaps a half mile; then turns abruptly westward past William Tavenner's field for about two hundred yards, when it turns again at a right angle, over a hill and passing another body of woods, breaks away southwesterly toward Lincoln. Hills and dales and abrupt turns mark its whole course.

The body of woods last mentioned drops away from the road into a little dell; and into this our men were moving. In the mean while, Wiltshire's scouting party kept in sight of the Federals until the head of the column was well into Hamilton. Then it advanced through the hollows and behind the woods on the Lincoln road toward the village until it came in front of the Yankee cavalry which had turned out into the Lincoln road. Our scouts were then near the outskirts of the village some distance north of William Tavenner's. The infantry were unloading and deploying into the open lot south of the town. These sights made Wiltshire's boys uneasy, and they mani-

HARRY T. SINNOTT
Company B

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fested a disposition to "report again to Colonel Mosby." But the leader had already received full instructions and he held them to their position in the road, even after the Yankee cavalry had opened fire upon them and broken into a charge. They had gotten within pistol range before our boys got word to "go," and the racing began.

In making the sharp turn around William Tavenner's orchard, John Adams's horse ran against a tree and threw him. Before he could get up the Yankees were on him. Over the hill our decoys came, the Yankees close behind them, past the woods in which we lay. Many of the fleetest chasers had gotten past us when we rushed out of the woods into the road, which was now crowded with them in hot pursuit of our boys. It seems to me that they might have expected something of the kind; but the fact is that they were so surprised that they made no show of a fight, but turned and rushed back with all the energy they had. This is proved by the fact that but one of our men, Captain Manning, was scratched by them at that point. John Chew and Binford were shot a half mile closer in toward the village, and young Keith was killed by the infantry's fire on the outskirts of the town.

Captain Glascock was in command of our men. In the arrangement for the onset he had placed his own command, Company D, in position, and the section of A which was attached to him was moving back deeper into the woods when Wiltshire's party

came dashing past. The sight of the Yankees close after them raised a question in our minds, and when Glascock ordered D to charge, A righted about in their tracks and rushed out on the road, tail end foremost. But either end could have properly been marked "extra hazardous." The roadway at once became congested, and some of us broke through the fence to cross the triangle of Tavenner's orchard and catch the fleeing foe on their flank. But Colonel Mosby was in the Tavenner yard and stopped us from further pursuit in that directon, because "the woods in front were full of infantry." But he did not succeed in calling off our men who had followed around the road. They pursued the flying foe back beyond the first body of woods, until they saw the long blue line of infantry rise up from behind the hedge fence that skirted one of the village lots. As the volley rang out, our boys swayed off into the woods by the roadside, but left Keith lying dead in the road from a Minie ball which had entered his eye. When the smoke cleared away the infantry, too, were seen to be running back to the town full tilt. The citizens of Hamilton swear that they were so demoralized that they broke ranks, and some of them threw their guns away and took refuge in the cellars of the houses.

Jim Sinclair insists that he rode through the town, collected "tribute" from a Yankee soldier in the middle of the street, and rode out by another road. I think that it is admitted history in that neighborhood

that some of the Yankee cavalry spent that night on the other side of the Potomac.

We had the whole party badly whipped, but didn't know it. The War Records show that there were not less than 1,100 of them, and our numbers in the fight did not reach one hundred and thirty. Two of our men were killed, and two wounded, one of whom fell into the hands of the enemy. They had fifteen killed and seventeen captured. We could never learn how many of them were wounded, but the citizens of Hamilton say that they were not less than fifty, for several houses were appropriated for hospital purposes, and their surgeons were busy all night.

The next day this precious wagon train was paraded through Loudoun by Upperville and Middleburg and back to the Snickersville pike, where reinforcements met it. We followed it closely with anxious attention, and offering every possible inducement to that regiment of six hundred cavalry, but not once could we induce it out of the range of the infantry's guns.

We thought to ride into their flank as they crossed Goose Creek over the narrow bridge in the pike below Upperville; but their ingenuity was equal to their fears. For when we dashed upon them they had already unloaded their infantry and deployed it over the creek bluffs, so that the cavalry might cross under the cover of their Minie rifles.

Finally, as the shades of evening lengthened, we charged upon their rear at Middleburg, but achieved nothing except the glory of galloping through the streets under the admiring gaze of our sweethearts. And this was my last ride down to battle with Mosby.

CHAPTER XV

A PAIR OF SCOUTS

Most of Mosby's men were fairly good scouts. Their constant dependence upon their observation and alertness, and the experience of the methods of the enemy, made them all more or less reliable in that line. Many of them were experts, and could run a picket or secure a countersign, or pierce to the recesses of a Yankee camp without it. But when it came to high art, Bush Underwood and John Russell were without rivals. Indeed, they did not rival each other.

Their respective spheres of operation were upon the extreme eastern and western boundaries of Mosby's Confederacy; one among the Federal camps in Fairfax and about Alexandria and Washington; the other among the moving columns and wagon-trains which traversed the lower valley of the Shenandoah.

Underwood was reared under the sombre pines of Fairfax, and he knew their forest recesses "as seamen know the sea." He was of a pronounced Anglo-Saxon type—almost an Albino—with an Indian's cast of features. He was cold blooded, calculating, patient; fearless, yet wary; shrewd and watchful, but dogged in pursuing his ends. He seemed to have an "instinct" for a Yankee camp or

picket, and the Federal flag waved over no precincts south of the Potomac which were sacred from his invasion by night, if not by day. I have watched by his side within a few hundred yards of the Chain Bridge over the Potomac. He slept his allotted hours away as peacefully as if his mother kept vigil over him in upper Loudoun; every minute of these same hours is accentuated in my memory with the vigor of a nervous chill.

He never got rattled; but would adjust himself to an emergency, to take it in and do just the right thing, with a promptness that was instinctive. He and Jim Sinclair sat at breakfast at the Pot House. Through the open door they saw a squad of Federal cavalry ride up to the yard gate, scarcely thirty feet away. Out of the back door, down the garden path, to the stable they flew. As the Yankees got around to the stable-yard gate, they jumped the fence, without bits in their horses' mouths, and scurried across the fields under the stimulus of a fire at pretty close range. When they got out of sight and straightened themselves up, they started out to do some hunting on their own account. The column out of which their visitors had come was moving along the highway toward Middleburg. They would cross Goose Creek at Benton's ford; and to this point, where something interesting was liable to be offered them, Bush and Jim pushed. As they warily approached the ford from the woods, around an abrupt bluff which skirted the road, they saw the van-guard, which had already crossed, disappear around a bend

on the Middleburg side of the creek. But within ten yards of them two Yankee officers sat upon their horses, which were still slaking their thirst.

"Surrender! and come here quick," Bush called in those cold, deadly tones of his.

The Yankees looked up into the muzzles of a pair of revolvers; then they threw their anxious gaze back down the road along which their followers were even then due. Bush understood the look and appreciated all that it meant.

"At the word 'three' we fire. One—two—" Well, you ought to have seen those horses scramble up the bank—and within full sight and inside of a hundred yards of their approaching friends. Before these latter could take in the situation, the officers were around the bluff and over the hills and safely away on a trip to Richmond, under an escort which gave them distinguished attention.

Lieutenant Russell was an Irish boy, scarcely eighteen years old, who had been reared among the environs of Berryville. In the idle hours spent in hunting and fishing he had acquired a familiarity with the immediate neighborhood, and a general knowledge of the country. It was an open country; and if the Yankees once caught sight of you, it was a run to the home base for one party or the other—in their case it being the nearest camp, and in ours the east bank of the Shenandoah. There was no cover for the sleuth; it was only the "bold, bad man" who could hope for glory in scouting that field.

John had had no advantages of education, but he

was gifted with great shrewdness and nerve, and an instinctive knowledge of men. He had the Celtic *genius* which, either discarding all intermediate processes of reasoning or working them out in his sub-consciousness, simply saw conclusions and went for them, as a matter of course. For instance, if Berryville were in the possession of the Yankees and he wished to enter the town, the only reasoning thing that he would do would be to locate the pickets, so to know where *not* to go; and his next act of consciousness would be to wake up at the point that he wanted to reach. If one should ask him how he came there, he could never tell. I have pumped him assiduously for details of such movements, he has travailed in soul to give forth to me; and yet nothing definite and tangible has ever come of our joint efforts.

One evening Companies C and E, under Lieut.-Col. Wm. H. Chapman, crossed the Shenandoah and bivouacked in Champ Shepherd's woods about three miles east of Berryville. Chapman learned that Sheridan had occupied Berryville that day, and that Torbert's cavalry was somewhere south of there. General Kershaw's force of Confederates had approached the town from the direction of Winchester, and his advance posts were located within speaking distance of Sheridan's pickets. The situation was promising and Chapman was entirely willing to add something to its gaiety. He sent Russell and a couple of companions into Berryville for details.

The first definite information that I can get locates

John's scouting party in Doctor Neill's stable-yard, about in the center of the town, after all honest men had gone to bed. From the stable-yard a narrow, rocky lane about two hundred yards long led to the Millwood pike, which opened into the main street of the town (or the Winchester pike), less than two hundred yards more north of the lane. From the front of Neill's house, which is now widely known as the hospitable residence of Hon. Marshall McCormick, a beautiful lawn swept down to the main street. Leaving his companions with his horse behind a convenient outhouse to await his signal, Russell crept up to the rear of Dr. Neill's house and gave the tap on the chamber window which answered for the doctor's night call.

"Who is that?" whispered the Doctor, after raising the window with what seemed to John to be an unusual degree of caution.

"It's me—Russell. What's the news?" answered John, with less regard to carefulness than the Doctor thought appropriate to the occasion.

"Hus-s-h! Go away from here!" the Doctor faltered back. "There is a Yankee picket in front of my house and the reserve is resting on my front porch."

But the insistent visitor stayed, risking a collapse on the Doctor's part, until he learned that Sheridan had moved his troops back a mile on the Charles Town pike, and that Kershaw's advance guard was camped in Boxwell's woods on the hill to the left of the town, and just then he heard a horseman ride

up the lane into the stable-yard and call "Halloa!" This new arrival was to the relief of the Doctor, but it introduced a new feature into the situation which called for John's prompt investigation and he went straight to meet it. It was so dark that only the outlines of the horseman could be made out, but John took for granted that he was a Yankee and assumed that he concluded the same about himself. Our friend, of course, held "the drop on him."

"Well, what can I do for you?" he asked in his most blarneyish tones, and with a touch of Irish brogue which prevented his speech from betraying him.

"I have lost my way and want to find the Millwood pike." He had just left the Millwood pike to turn into that lane. But John did not think it advisable to tell him so—not yet awhile.

"Why, what in the world do you want to find the Millwood pike this time of night for? You had better put up here with the rest of us."

"No, I must hurry on. I have dispatches for General Torbert, who is somewhere between Millwood and White Post, and it is important that he should get them. My four comrades are waiting for me down the hill here."

"Oh, that's another matter," graciously answered John. "A couple of friends and myself are here pie-rooting around, and we will be glad to show you to the pike." And he gave the whistle that brought the other boys out with his horse.

They moved off down the lane a piece, when a

new thought seemed to come to Russell. He had ridden in front of the Yankee, and turning his horse so as to come close along side of the courier, he said:

"Say, pardner, let me see those dispatches."

"Of course I can't," answered the Yankee.

"Oh, yes, you can," was insisted, and enforced with the argument of the ready revolver. Of course there was nothing to do but to hand over the precious papers.

The escort waiting down at the road were quietly advised of the situation and promptly responded to John's invitation to a midnight ride to Chapman's camp. The dispatches proved to be of such importance that Colonel Chapman himself immediately set out for Kershaw's camp with them. It was reported that they advised Torbert of the location of Kershaw's wagon-train, and that Fitz Lee, who should escort it, had gotten separated from it for a few hours, and instructed the dashing Federal cavalry leader how to cut it off and capture it.

The departure of Colonel Chapman left his brother Sam, the fighting parson, in command of our squadron. With that knowledge the boys "felt a presentiment" that something was going to happen. And they were not disappointed.

The next morning Captain Chapman moved the command toward the storm-center. Keeping under cover of the hills between which bold streams ran to the river, he neared the Millwood pike about a mile south of Berryville. When he emerged from a little valley about a couple of hundred yards from it, they

saw it blue with Federal cavalry, moving from the direction of Millwood. It looked as though there was a regiment of them.

The Reverend Chapman considered that Mosby's men were organized for fighting purposes; that whenever Providence presented an opportunity for a fight it was his simple duty to embrace it and trust the Lord for consequences. So he incontinently pitched into what was in front of him. His impetuous and unexpected charge sent the Yankees a-flying. Most of them broke across country toward Winchester. Our men followed them nearly a mile, and captured seventy-five or eighty of them, besides quite a number who were shot and left on the fields. We lost four of our own best men, however, Jarman and Iden were killed outright, and Lieutenant Frank Fox and Clay Adams were mortally wounded. Others were slightly hurt.

Captain Sam himself was a relentless pursuer. When last seen approaching Gold's woods four Yankees were in front of him. He returned eventually with four *horses.*

In the mean while, the command of our men devolved on Lieutenants Russell and Font Beattie. The emergency was now one which called for a high order of talent. Sheridan's forces were less than two miles away to the north. The party which we had attacked was evidently Torbert's advance returning from Millwood at the south; and the river —our blessed home base—was not less than four miles away. The nearest practicable crossing was

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Shepard's ford, and for that point Russell struck out.

But Torbert's main body had been stirred up by the sounds of the fight, and had no doubt been advised of the situation by the fugitives who had escaped from it. And so the trip of our boys to the river was soon made interesting by the close attendance on them of Torbert's cavalry. Over the neighboring hills regiments and regiments of it were seen moving also toward the river. Every now and then some of their skirmishers would dash up near enough to burn some powder at us, but the range was too long, or their nerves were unstrung, so that the shots served only to excite our men. They recognized that the Yankees were maneuvering to get to the river first in overwhelming numbers and just quietly gather them in. They looked to Russell as their Moses; but, like the children of Israel, too, were much disposed to murmur at him for leading them into the hopeless situation.

This pushed the poor boy to his limit. Exhausting his Irish suavity in soothing and nerving the boys, he at the same time had his combative side on the strain to beat those Yankees to the river and keep them from closing in on him. The interval between the lines was scarcely three hundred yards when we rose the river bluff in Burchell's field a half mile above the ford. But the Yankee advance had already touched the river road, and was coming down toward Lanham's blacksmith shop, situated on

the bank. And now Captain Sam's Providence intervened.

Horace Deahl and Cy. McCormick, of the Sixth Virginia Cavalry, were at this blacksmith shop, having their horses shod. Deahl happened to be mounted when the blue file of the van-guard showed itself approaching the shop, and being somewhat of the sentiments of the boy at the circus who "killed snakes wherever he saw them," jumped right at them. Perhaps the temerity of the act took them by surprise, or suggested that he had good backing, and they gave way before him. When they saw him dash by them and fly up the river road alone they hastened back to the shop. Poor Cy. had mounted and started in the other direction when he ran up against one of those detestable gates which even yet obstruct that river road. His efforts to open it from horseback were futile and he dismounted and took to the bushes. But his career as a bushman was soon brought to an end by his attentive friends, the enemy.

All this took precious moments, during which our boys were dashing down the road to Shepard's ford; and when the Yankees came up, our rear-guard was joyfully pulling for the shore. We escaped without the loss of a man and brought out nearly a hundred prisoners and horses. So John's character as a successful Moses was reestablished for all time.

CHAPTER XVI

MY BOY FRANK

Frank and I were foster-brothers in the sense that we drew our earliest sustenance from the same abundant fount. In the division of my father's estate, which took place while we both still wore short skirts, he was allotted to me for my very own property. We continued to be playmates, sharing our childish joys, as well as other things which came to us, not excepting sorrows growing out of occasional switchings at the hands of our respective maternals for escapades into which he loyally followed me. It will be hard for many of the present generation to understand that while as we grew in years, our intimacy was perfect, the relation of master and slave was strictly maintained. Perhaps the key note to the situation was struck by the wit who defined a perfect alliance as being one in which "one party loves and the other consents to be loved."

In early youth Frank and I were separated; he to remain with his mother at my grandfather's home in Clarke County, and I to spend the years of my tutelage at Warrenton, in Fauquier. Our friendship was put in repair every summer during the vacations which I spent at the patriarchal headquarters.

In the fall of 1863 my mother thought that she detected some symptoms about me which made her uneasy, and which she thought could be best dealt with by my stern old grandfather. Accordingly I was sent to his home.

It would be beside my story to tell of the quiet pleasures of that winter at the old homestead—all the dearer to memory now, because they are the last that it bears of the dead and gone Virginia plantation life. Not less than two dozen of the negroes remained there; the crops of the year had been abundant and were harvested without interference; and the threshings and cornhuskings made honest work for the days, while the notes of the fiddle and the banjo which floated from the "quarters" at night softened the hours around the glowing fires "up at the house."

But with the quickening of spring the impulse to hie away to the army mastered me. I had not spent many nights under the hay-stack when I rode in to breakfast one morning and found Frank waiting for me. He had literally run away from the freedom which was his any day that he chose to claim it within the Federal lines, to the joys of being a slave to his young master. But his heart was in his service, and, like his master, he still regards the days when he was an honorary member of Mosby's command as the happiest of his life.

His employment consisted mostly in following me around, when at home, and attending to the horses; and especially in keeping the spare horses out of the

way of Yankee raiders. This latter service brought him some adventures. The Yankees could seldom get very close to our vicinity without some notice of their approach; and then Frank's duty would be to rush the horses to the neighboring mountains. Some times this notice would precede their coming by the briefest intervals; and more than once Frank crossed the creek, which seemed to be the accepted danger line, under the fire of his pursuers. Rather an anomalous kind of "run-away nigger," was it not?

In some way—I never discovered how—he came into the possession of a pistol. He wore it around on extra occasions, in holster to belt, just like a sure-enough soldier, and no doubt he felt himself to be one. But we all of course regarded it as a very harmless amusement and only chaffed him about the promptness with which he would not use it when he should get a chance.

One day the Yankees were running him and some white boys, who also were trying to save horses, pretty close. One Yankee ran a long way ahead of the others—that sometimes happened when there seemed to be no danger in the pursued. Whether Frank was really impeded by his led-horse or oppressed with a sense of the possession of that pistol, he fell behind; and when he pulled out of the creek his pursuer was entering it on the other side. The boy turned and cocked his revolver.

"You'd better go back, mister; 'cause you'll fall in de water when I shoot."

The Yankee promptly pulled back, in the light of this unexpected development, and cried:

"You're a damned fool, boy!"

"Yes, I knows I is. An' dat's what makes me goin' to shoot."

That closed the incident, and each pursued his respective course.

The Reverend Frank Hall, of Cedarville, Virginia, is now a gray-headed old grandfather. He insists that he is indebted to his early associations with me for the fact that he entered the ministry; but he respectfully refrains from saying whether my influence wooed him into the paths of peace, or he was moved to enter them by my "horrible example."

We keep up our friendship of boyhood's days. He comes now and then from his home in a distant county to visit me. And what I do feel a pride in is that my white friends of his neighborhood tell me that Frank and his children and grandchildren are, by long odds, the most respectable and reliable family of colored people in that community.

CHAPTER XVII

EULOGY OF REV. SYDNOR G. FERGUSON—A TYPICAL MOSBY MAN

[Read at the Reunion at Berryville, Va., 1904.]

Comrades: In the sweetest songs there are minor chords of sadness. Amid the joys of these reunions we are reminded that

"To the Past go more dead faces,
Every year;
Come no new ones in their places,
Every year."

There can be no recruits to our brotherhood. It has been long since the last initiation was had under the blue light of burning powder and to the weird music of the battle's roar; and the ceremony can never be repeated. The years will not be many until two or three of us, perhaps, will meet and part—and Mosby's Command will be a thing of history.

Since we gathered a year ago, a representative of the very best type of our peculiar soldiery—Rev. Sydnor G. Ferguson—has passed away from us to the world of spirits. He was among the youngest, strongest, and most vigorous of us; and we reasonably hoped that it would be he who should perform the final offices of his religion for John S. Mosby Camp. But, as the sun rose on the morning of

March 7, 1904, without a moment's warning, the last roll-call came to him, and promptly, calmly, manfully—as in the old days—he answered, "Here."

I do not know what excellences of a soldier Syd Ferguson did not possess. He was only a boy—eighteen years old—but he filled a man's place up full. He was brave without being rash, modest and retiring, but always ready; and his courage was of that high order which could quietly wait in the thick of dangers until the moment for action came and then would go the limit of duty. He was too sensible to be indifferent to danger, and too honest to affect bravado; but with a thorough consciousness of all that it meant, he would ride unflinchingly up to the very face of death. But I need not recall the characteristics nor recount the deeds which won him a foremost place in your esteem, my comrades —yourselves worthy judges of soldierly qualities. No more can be said for him, in this regard, than that you admired and loved him.

I had the privilege of a close intimacy with him after the war was over. Together we took up again the broken threads of studies which had been interrupted by grimmer duties; and under peaceful academic shades at Upperville, Virginia, the ties which had been welded in the fierce heat of war were riveted into an attachment which I believe will hold beyond the grave. Our paths of life then drifted far apart, and it was at rare intervals that we met. But you and I followed with glowing eyes his strong

and steadily upward course in his chosen walk, and whenever we heard of the courage and consecration and success with which he fought the powers of evil, as he had fought other foes by our side, our pulses quickened and our bosoms swelled with pride, as we claimed, "He was a Mosby man."

And he was ever loyal to us. During the last few years of his life he and I got side by side again, and I know that his great heart beat for his old comrades in arms with a pathetic yearning. We filled a place in his life second only to that which his immediate family occupied. He thought much of us, he spoke much about us, and he gave to us freely of the rich "coin of His realm"—he prayed much for us. His ambition was to maintain a position of influence among us from which he might be made a blessing to us. His hope was that, as we passed down the western slope of life together and the hardness, bred of manhood's struggles and antagonisms, softened under the rays of the setting sun, the associations of early days would reassert their strength to draw his comrades with him into the paths of peace wherein he trod. Perhaps his most notable pulpit performances of late years have been his annual sermons to old soldiers, inspired by a deep sense of the value of his religion and an intense desire that its blessings should be shared by those to whom his soul was bound by the ties of youth and common experiences of hardship and dangers. Possibly, our tender memories of him will prove more potent toward

the accomplishment of his hopes than was even his bodily presence among us.

I do not know of any of all our number who more brilliantly than he has illustrated the truth that the same qualities of intelligence, nerve, and force of character which were essential to distinction in our ranks, insured influence in civil life. The world and the church have acknowledged Sydnor G. Ferguson as one of the best of them. Let us hold him in proud and loving remembrance as one of the best of us.

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